PLANTING IDEAS • BEAUTIFUL GARDENS • EXPERT ADVICE

GARDENS

ILLUSTRATED

JUNE 2013 £4.10

How to create the romance of a COTTAGE GARDEN

Designer gardens by Jinny Blom and Sarah Price

Lupins

Choosing the best cultivars plus growing advice

Sweet peas

Expert guide to varieties with the most delectable scent

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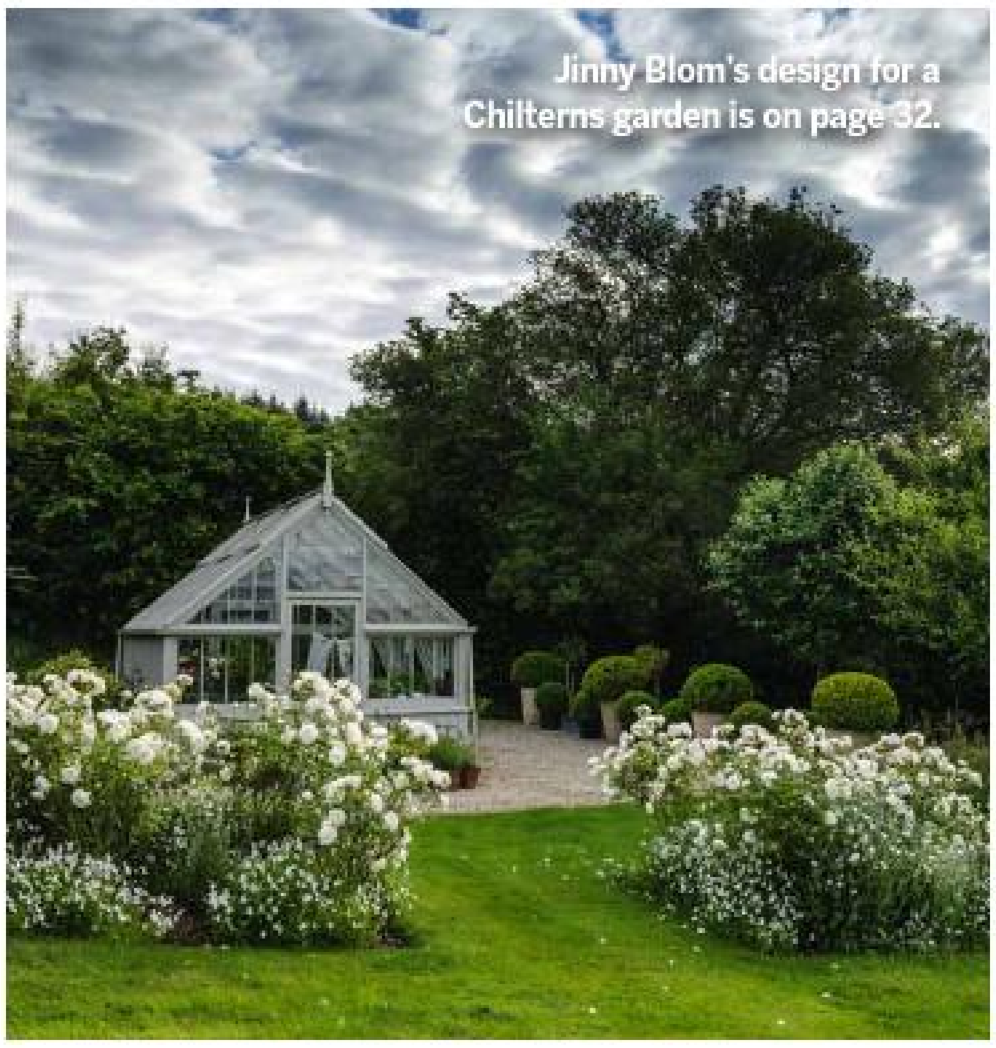
editor's letter

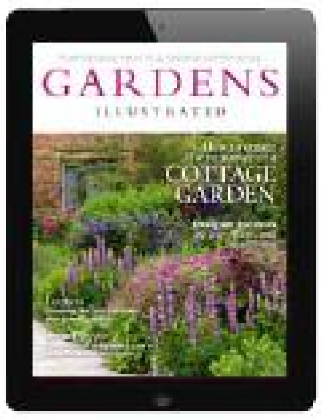
I've always taken clippings, from magazines, newspapers, catalogues and anything really that draws my eye. Every now and again, I have a clear-out and am always surprised at how little my tastes change over the years. In her design series this month, Annie Guilfoyle writes about how to find inspiration and hone ideas for your own particular style of garden, and I was especially drawn to her suggestion of editing down collections of images and selecting only those that really 'speak to you'. This issue we feature gardens by Jinny Blom and Sarah Price, two of my favourite designers, both of whom frequently use a strong layout overlaid with rich planting schemes. Finding your own sense of aesthetic is one thing, but knowing what plants will work well in your garden's conditions is vital to success, so this issue we feature wonderful articles by outstanding plantsmen Fergus Garrett, John Hoyland and Graham Rice about some of their favourite plants. The interest in vegetable growing, wildlife gardening and keeping livestock, such as chickens and bees, continues to rise – all perfect ingredients for cottage gardens. Francine Raymond, a long-term advocate of a relaxed yet beautiful style of gardening, explains how you can achieve a similar look. I hope you find plenty of inspiration and information in this issue,

Juliet

The best plants for the month of June, profiled on page 20.



Jinny Blom's design for a Chilterns garden is on page 32.



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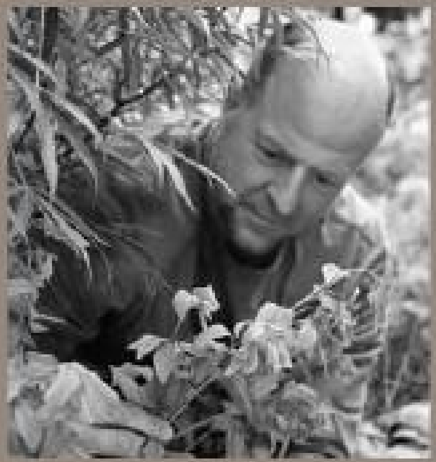

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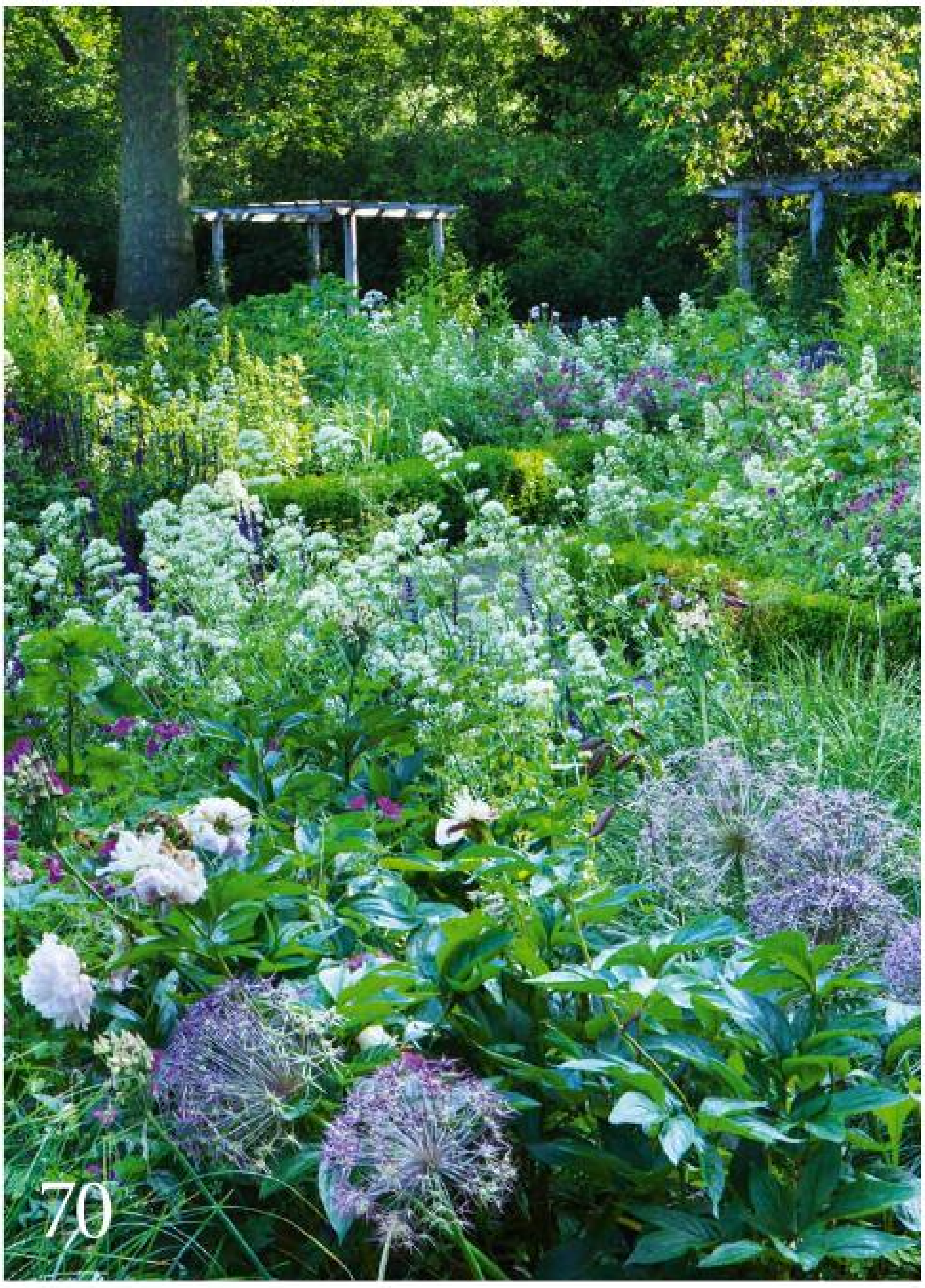

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COVER IMAGE
Jonathan Buckley / NTPL
See feature on page 52.
Shot at Sissinghurst, Kent, TN17 2AB. Tel 01580 710701.
www.nationaltrust.org.uk

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when you subscribe to
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READER OFFERS

- **Free watering can** plus save up to 28% when you subscribe* – see page 30
- Join our **exclusive GARDENS ILLUSTRATED reader day** to visit Gravetye Manor for a tour of the garden, lunch and talks by writer Tim Richardson and head gardener Tom Coward – see page 19

*** Offer applies to UK customers only.**

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ABC July-Dec 2012 34,510

contributors

TOM PETHERICK

Tom has been a writer and broadcaster specialising in organics for 25 years. He has written five books and is a partner in the sustainable landscape design company Petherick, Urquhart and Hunt. Read about his visit to Pinsla on page 80.

"Pinsla is a garden that oozes Cornwall from every pore, pure romance in a fairytale setting."

FRANCINE RAYMOND

Francine has long proclaimed the joys of productive gardening. She has recently moved to a new plot and and is enjoying gardening on a smaller scale. She has been ruminating on the best ways to recreate cottage garden charm, and you can see her conclusions on page 62.

"Gardening in harmony with nature and local conditions is always rewarding."

GRAHAM RICE

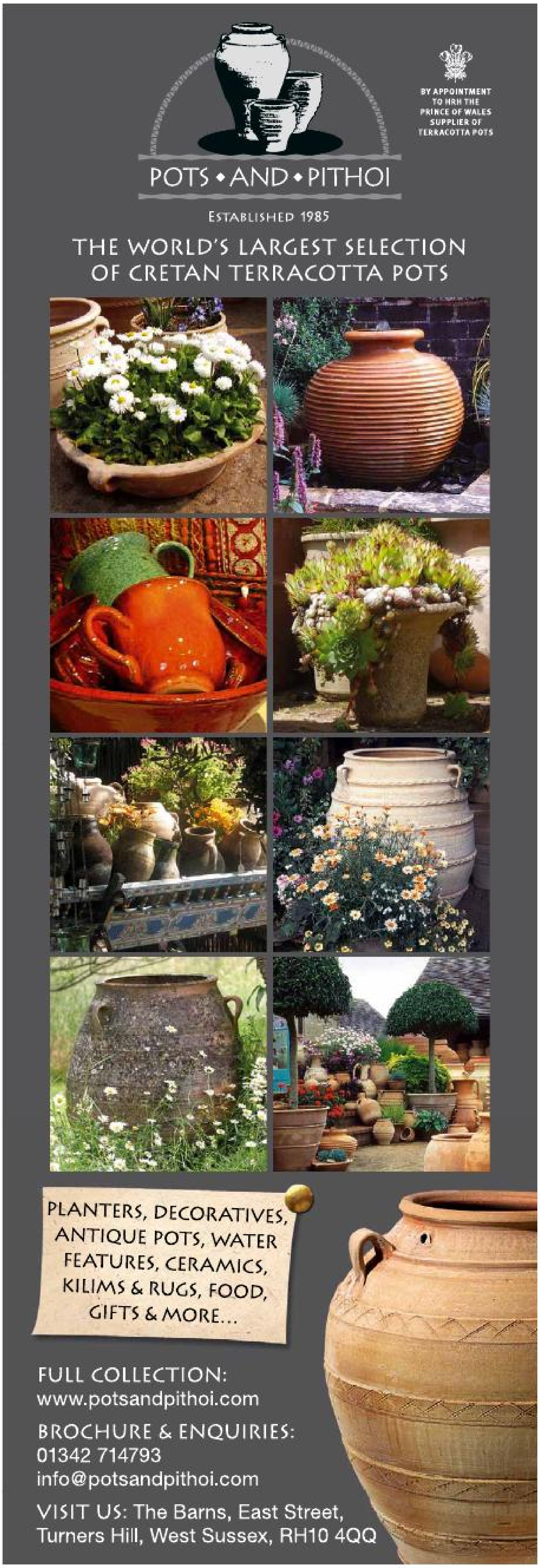
Graham blogs about his gardens at Transatlantic Gardener.com. He is Editor-in-Chief of the *RHS Encyclopedia of Perennials*, and author of *The Sweet Pea Book* and *Powerhouse Plants*. He writes on choosing and using sweet peas on page 76.

"It would be a strange gardener indeed who failed to admire sweet peas."

NON MORRIS

Non's garden design practice, Fraser & Morris, specialises in atmospheric planting. Recent projects include the South London Gallery in Peckham, a new woodland walk in Sussex and an artist's private garden. Turn to page 40 to read about her visit to Capel House.

"Vibrant drifts of orange and pink in a bog garden that grows higher and higher as summer progresses – wonderful."



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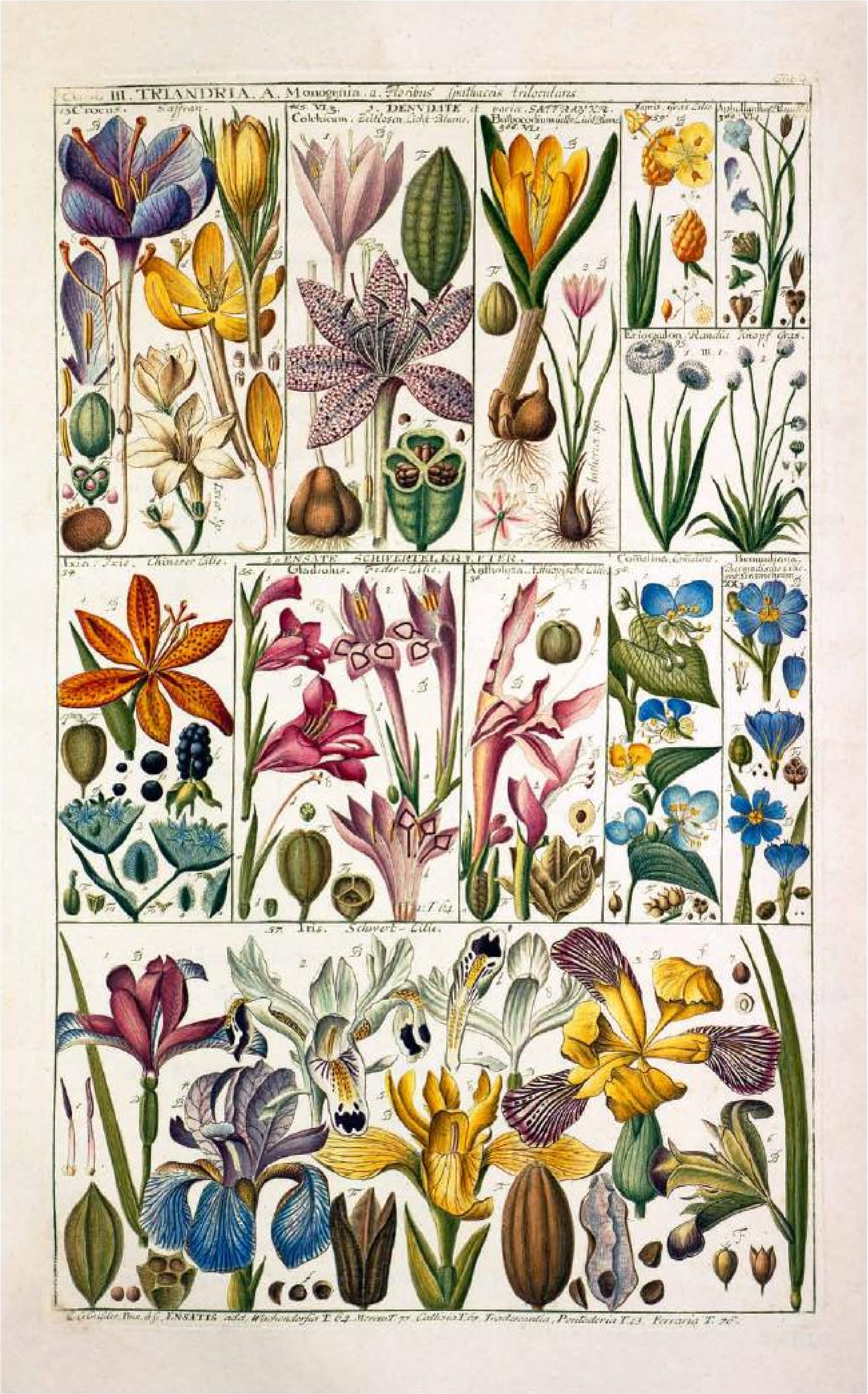
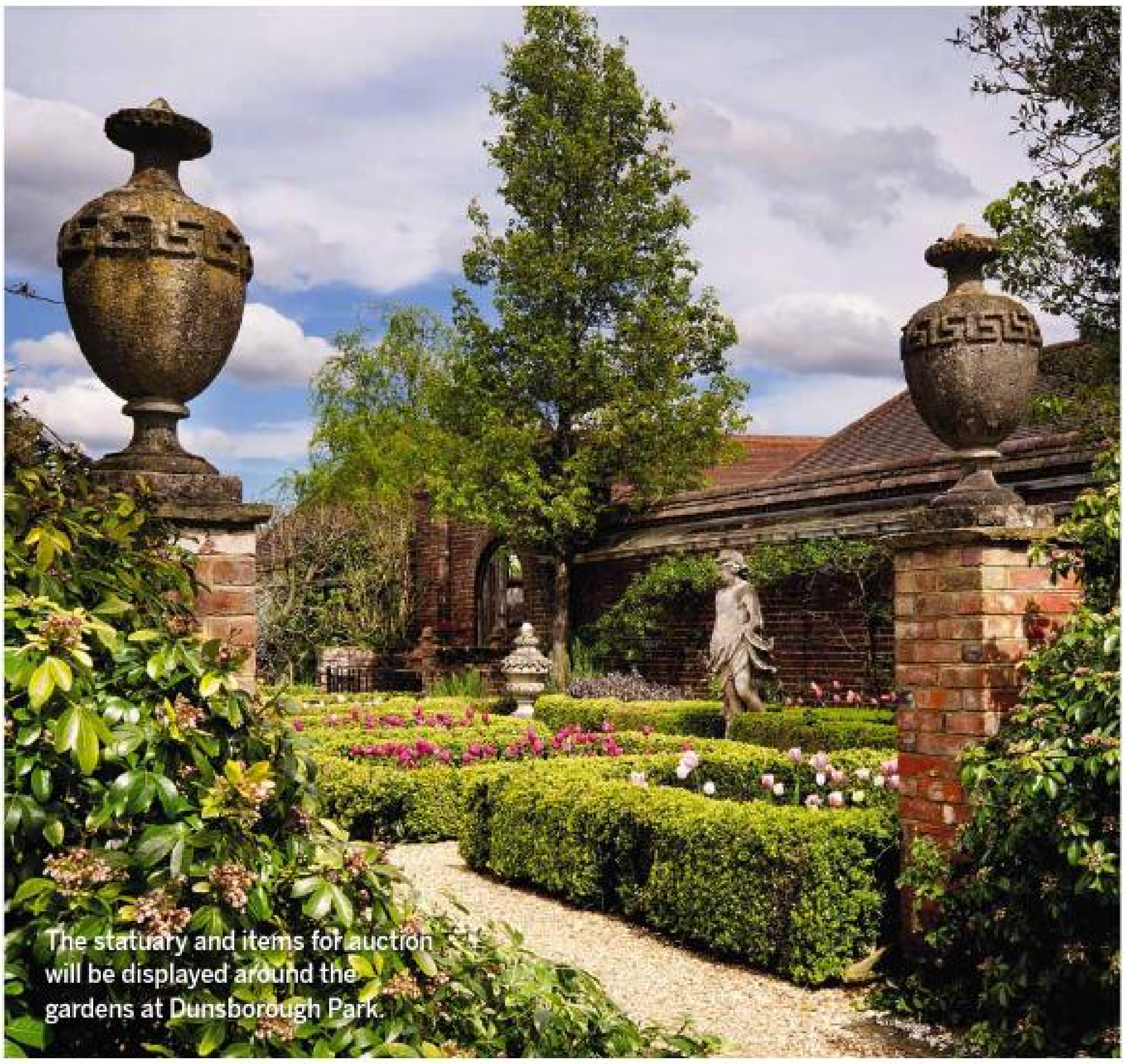

III. TRIANDRIA. A. Monogynia. a. Floribus spathaceis trilocularis
Crocus. Saffran.
DENVDATE
Colchicum. Zeitlosen Licht-Blume.
Ixia. Ixie. Chineser Lilie.
ENSATE SCHWERTELKRÄUTER.
Gladiolus. Feder-Lilie.
Iris. Schwert-Lilie.

GARDEN ART

Vintage appeal

Detailed botanical art can be as inspiring as the plants themselves. Online art publisher Easyart now offers a selection of over 1,000 prints from the Royal Horticultural Society's archive of images. Choose from detailed botanical studies, seed packet covers, flowers, fruit and vegetables and wildlife illustrations or paintings dating from 1514 through to the present day. You then select the size of your print and the frame you want. Prices start from £19.95. www.easyart.com/collections/rhs

This print comes from an engraved and hand-coloured plate from botanist and geologist Johannes Gessner's book *Tabulae Phytographicae*, dated 1795.



The statuary and items for auction will be displayed around the gardens at Dunsborough Park.

AUCTION

Garden art and antiques

Items from the statuary and garden ornament collection at Dunsborough Park in Surrey are being auctioned this month by Christie's. The 18th-century garden layout was restored in the 1990s with the help of designers Penelope Hobhouse and Rupert Golby. Viewing of the collection, which includes some rare and historic items of statuary and gardening antiques, takes place at Dunsborough Park on 14-18 June (entry is by catalogue only; £30). The auction then takes place 19-20 June at Christie's South Kensington, London. Tel 020 7839 9060, www.christies.com

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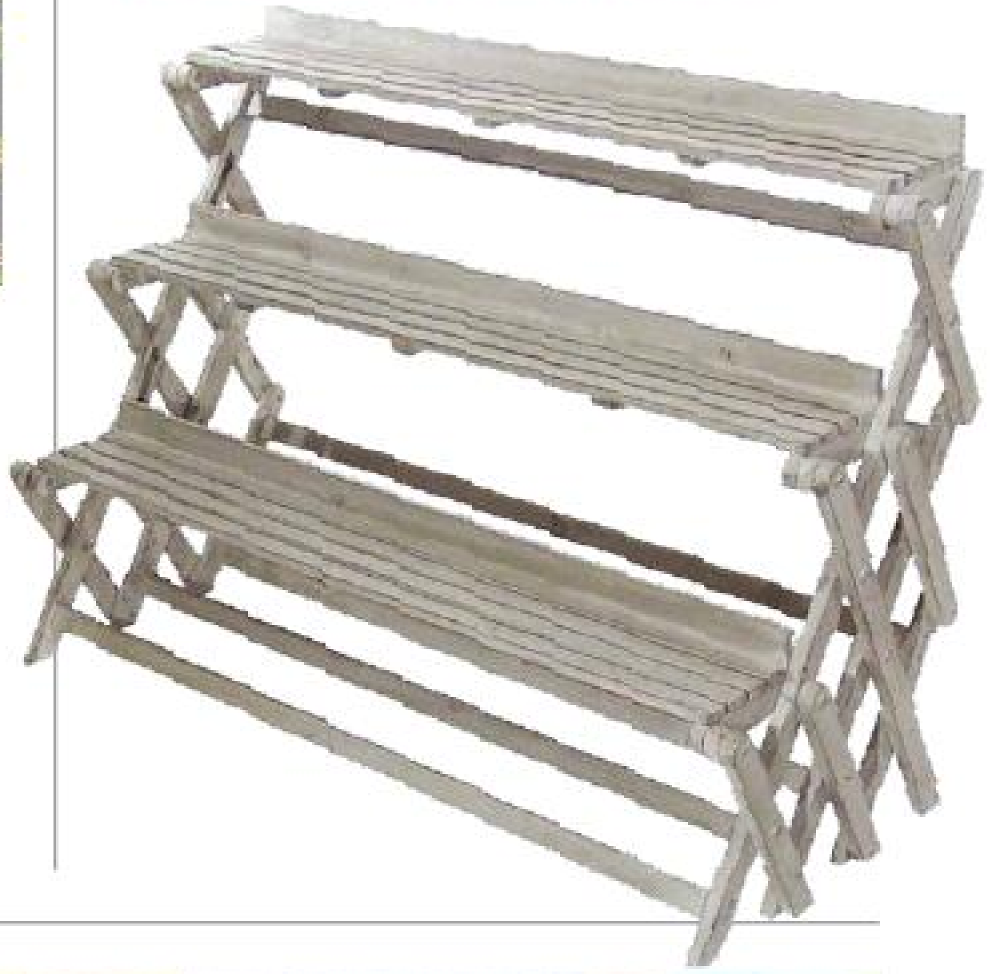
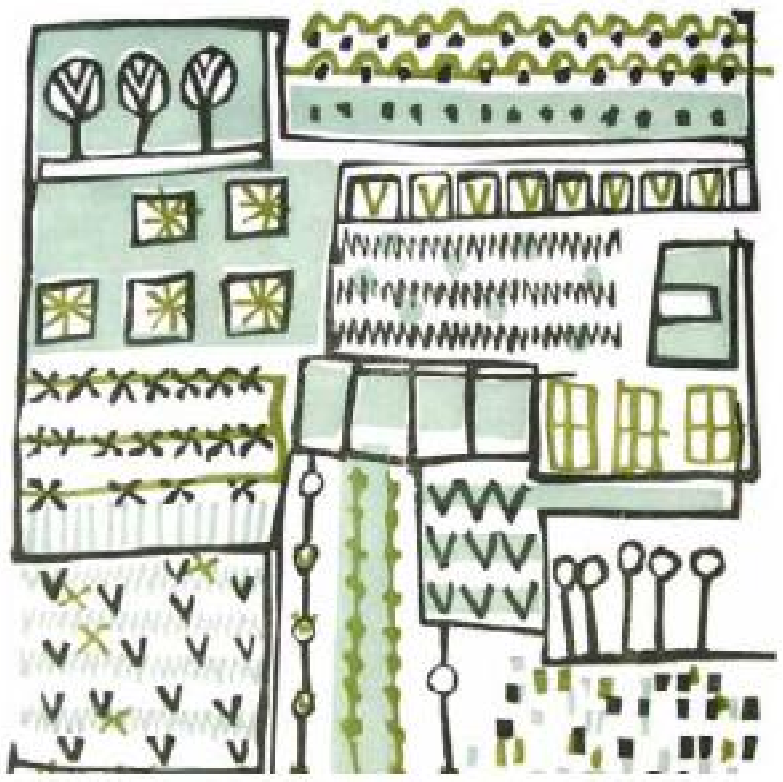
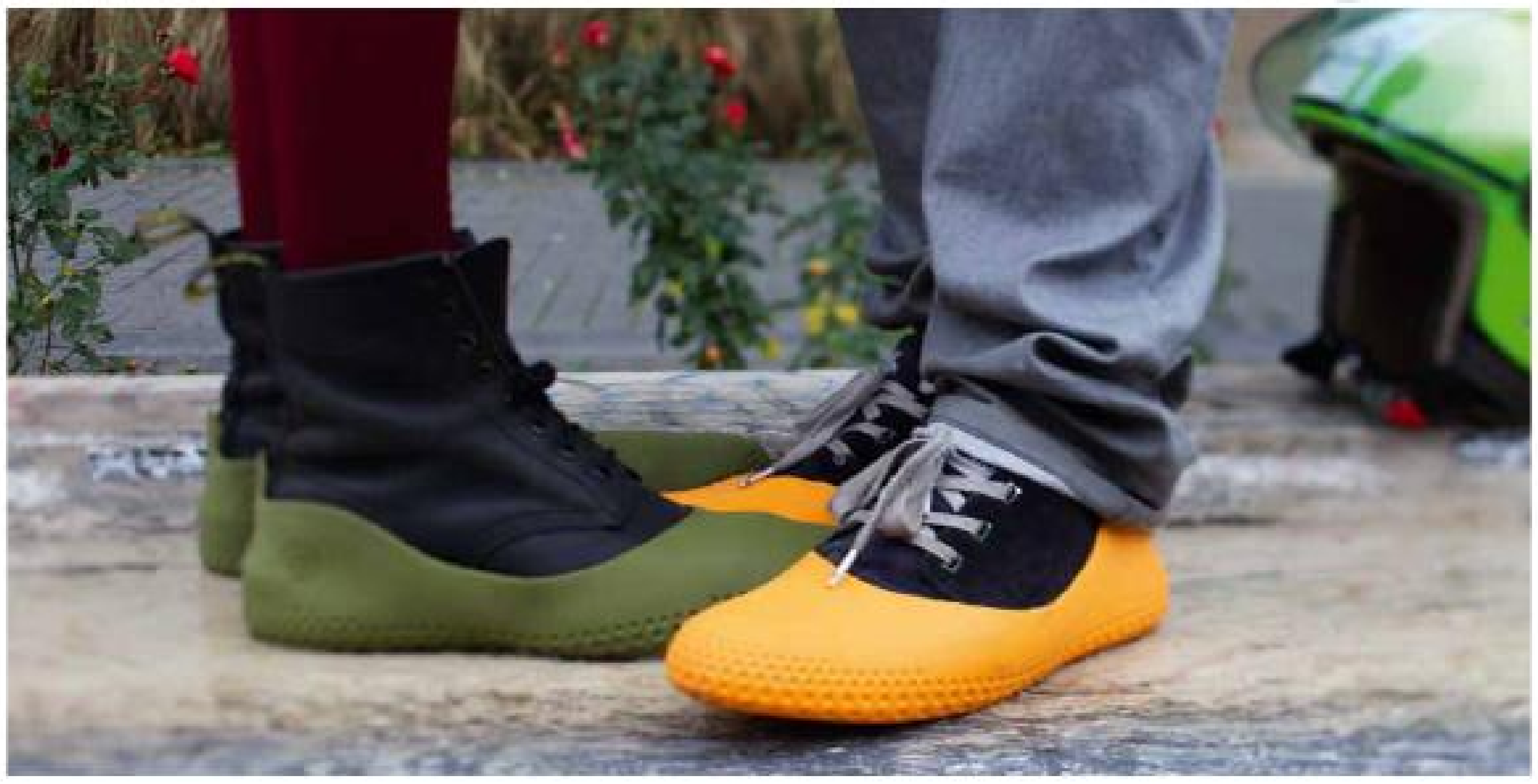


EXHIBITION

Veg plotting

Artist Kate Farley takes ideas from her allotment and turns them into graphic images. Tinsmiths in Herefordshire is exhibiting a range of Kate's limited edition prints and textiles. Until 16 June. Tel 01531 632083, www.tinsmiths.co.uk

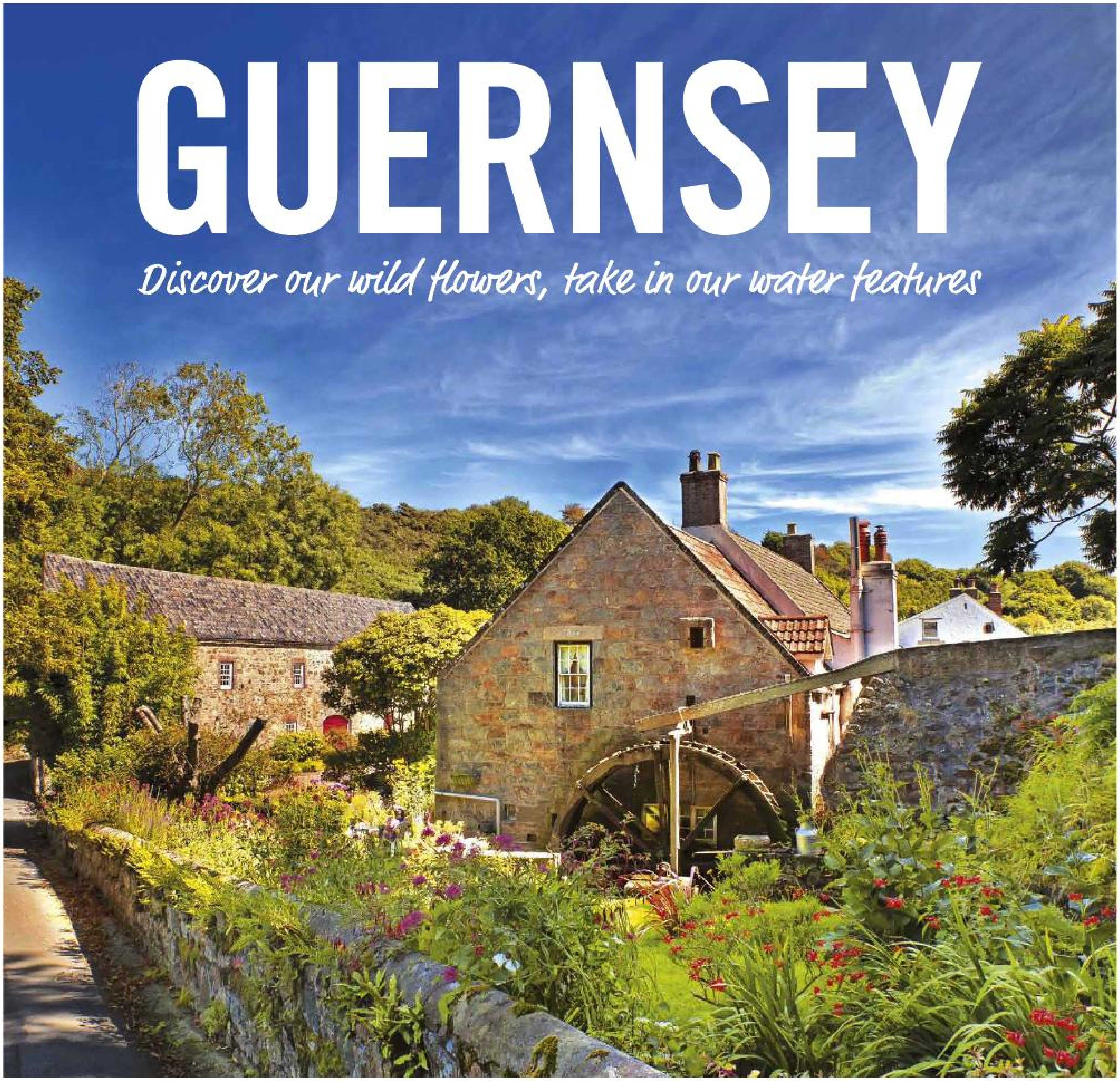




PRACTICAL IDEAS

Save your shoes

Who knows what the British summer holds in store this year, but given its vagaries it pays to be prepared. If you're visiting a show, tuck these moulded rubber overshoes from French company Mouillère in your bag, and if the going underfoot is muddy or soft, these can easily be pulled over your shoes to protect them and keep your feet dry. Non-slip, they are also good for coping in the snow, or when cycling or boating. Available in lots of different colours, €49. www.mymouillere.com



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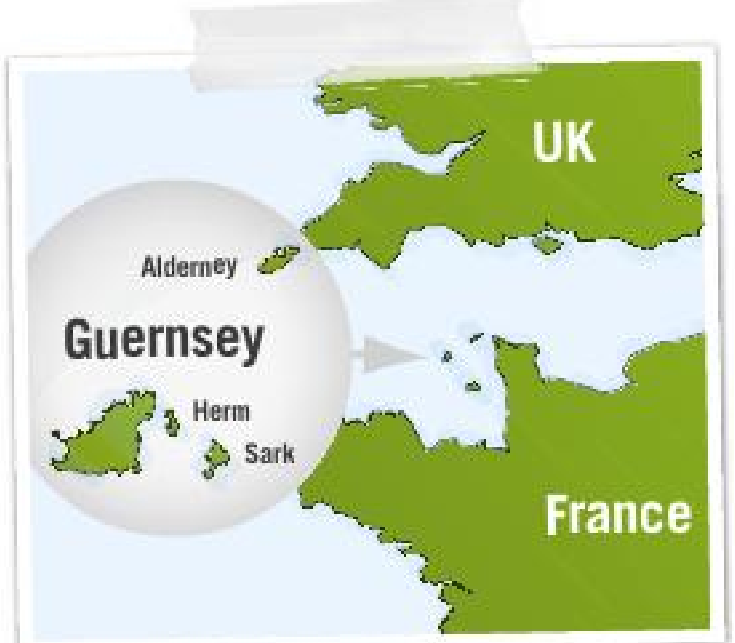

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The new garden at Titley Mill will be open as part of the garden festival.

GARDEN FESTIVAL

Gardens in the Wild

This new garden festival celebrates rural Herefordshire's landscape and hidden garden gems. 'Gardens in the Wild', based in the village of Titley, offers a weekend of talks from leading gardeners, plus open gardens, guided walks to see wildflower meadows, plant sales, craft demonstrations, and a Saturday night dinner. 22-23 June. Events can be booked in advance. Tel 01544 327133, www.gardensinthewild.org

GNOMES ARE BACK

The Chelsea Flower Show saw the charity auction of 150 celebrity-decorated gnomes. Now you can create your own garden companion with the ColourMeGnome kit, available from June. Included is a plain ceramic gnome ready to be brought to life, along with some coloured craft pens, £19.99.

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Diary

Irises in the West Garden at Doddington.

- **Iris Week at Doddington Hall**

Iris Week sees box-edged parterres woven with blocks of colourful irises to stunning effect. The last day coincides with the Plant Fair. 2-9 June, daily 11am-4.30pm. Garden entry £5. Doddington Hall, Doddington, Lincs LN6 4RU. Tel 01533 694308, www.doddingtonhall.com

- **Hex Festival of rare plants, roses and kitchen gardens**

Stylish Belgium garden show featuring specialist nurseries, exhibitions, demonstrations and talks, held in the gardens of Hex. 7-9 June, 10am-6pm. €8. Kasteel Hex, B3870 Heers, Belgium. Tel +32 12 747341, www.hex.be

- **Burford Open Gardens**

Plant sales from specialist nurseries and over 20 open gardens in and around the Cotswold market town of Burford. 15-16 June, 2-6pm. £3. Burford is just off the A40 midway between Oxford and Cheltenham. www.burfordfestival.org

- **Blenheim Palace Flower Show**

This is Blenheim's first garden and lifestyle event featuring plants and gardens, floral marquee, design ideas and expert advice, all held in the historic grounds. 21-23 June, 9.30am-5pm. £12 (£10 in advance). Blenheim Palace, Woodstock, Oxfordshire OX20 1PP. Tel 01702 549623, www.blenheimflowershow.co.uk

- **Woburn Abbey Garden Show**

Set against the backdrop of the abbey, the show offers specialist nurseries, garden sundries, demonstrations and advice plus tours of the gardens. 22-23 June, 10am-5pm. £10.99 (£9 in advance). Tel 01525 290333, www.woburn.co.uk

- **Stone Carving for the Garden**

Carve a beautiful sculpture or decorative planter for your garden in Cotswold stone. Learn the skills needed to carve in relief and in the round. 22–23 June, 10am-4.30pm. £130. Ardington School of Crafts, School Road, Ardington, Oxfordshire OX12 8PN. Tel 01235 833433, www.ardingtonschoolofcrafts.com

- **Hurdle Making**

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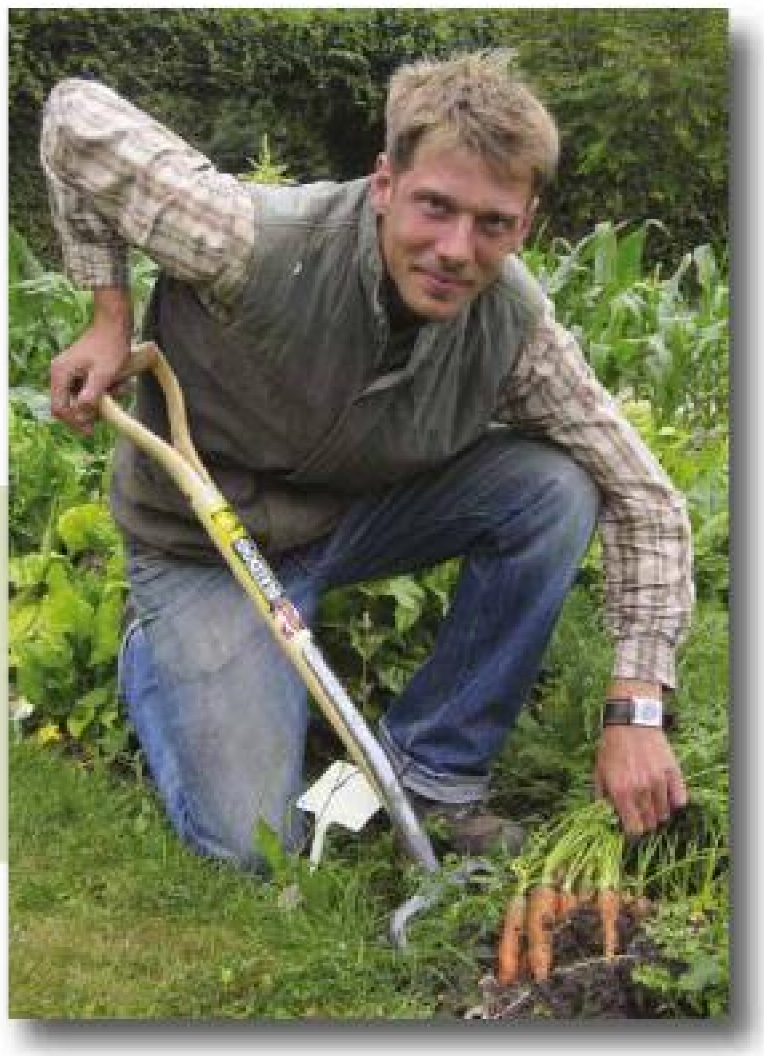

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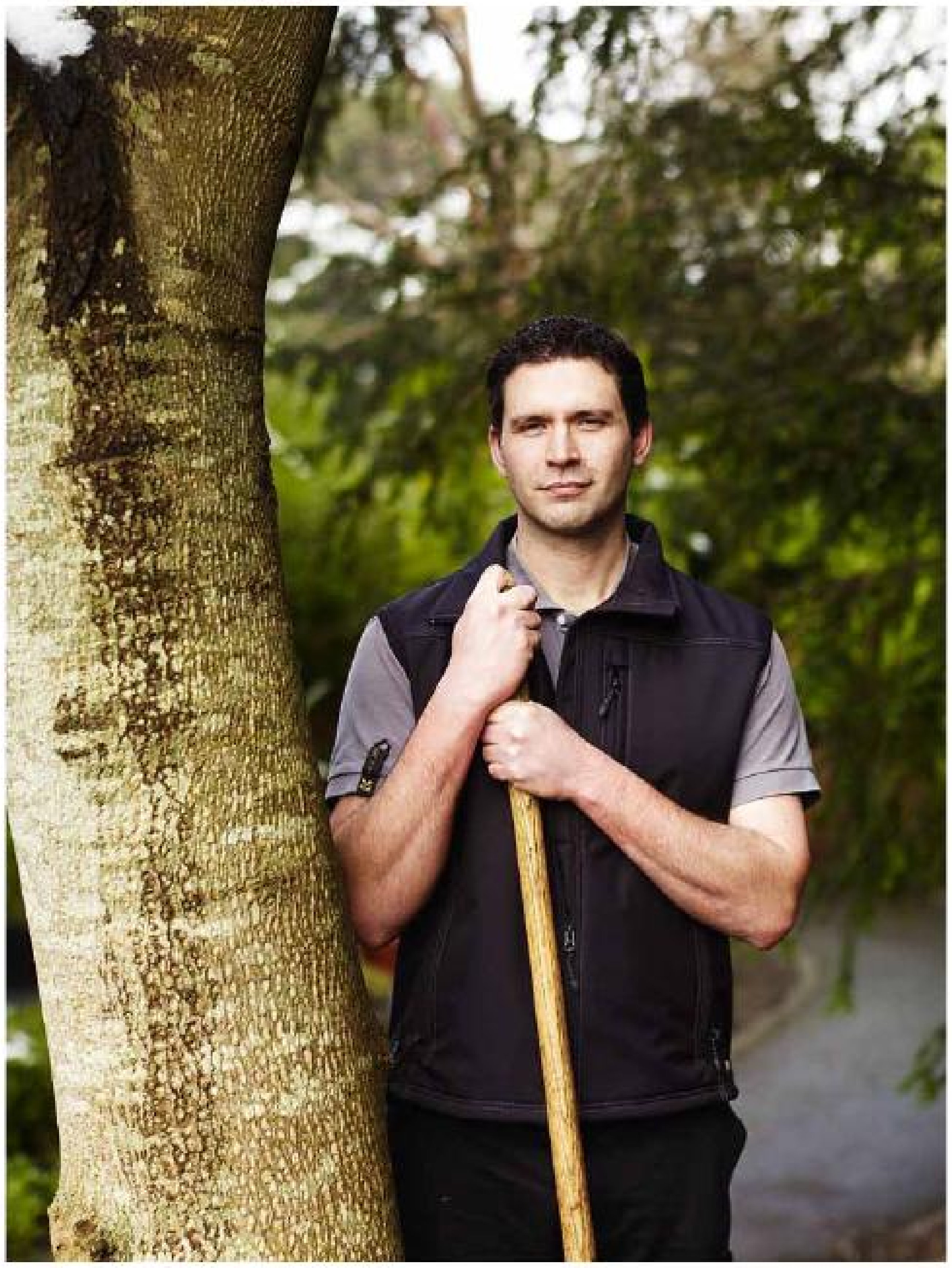

Steve Whitaker

As one of the candidates who went through the National Trust Careership scheme, Steve has been able to focus on his passion for conservation

PORTRAIT ANDREW MONTGOMERY

Earliest garden memory Enjoying my gran's immaculate garden and eating gooseberries and apples straight from her plot.

What was your route into horticulture? I studied electronics at university while working part-time for a friend's garden landscape and maintenance firm to pay my bills. I then worked for a time as a project manager for a broadcast systems provider, but during this period I realised my true calling was horticulture. Among other things, it encompasses many of my skills, means that I can work almost anywhere in the country, has enabled me to give up my gym membership and, most importantly to me, it allows me to indulge my desire to work with plants in a beautiful environment.

Favourite garden Tresco Abbey Garden in the Isles of Scilly. A genuinely sub-tropical island paradise that pushes the boundaries of what can be grown in this part of the world with the natural, wild, and exquisite island vista as a contrasting backdrop.

Three most worthwhile tips for every gardener Right plant, right place; the five Ps – prior planning prevents poor performance; look after your tools and your tools will look after you.

Favourite planting style I'm very fond of properties with Arts and Crafts influences. Home and garden as one, with a blending from home to formally structured garden and a gradual transition into the informal, with vistas to a natural landscape beyond.

Unsung hero of the plant world Algae. I read it's responsible for a large percentage of the earth's oxygen. If true, it deserves respect.

Biggest challenge facing gardeners today In the current economic climate, the first things to be affected are those that seem least essential – which often means our green spaces. But these places of peace, tranquillity and beauty are some of our most important assets as oases of calm in an otherwise hectic and sometimes abrasive modern world. I think ploughing forward with keeping up the maintenance of our gardens is a priority.

Most embarrassing moment regarding plants I've probably been caught talking to a plant or two at some point in my career to date. Most likely in the glasshouse giving young plants a pep talk. That's pretty embarrassing.

- **Email address** steve.whitaker@nationaltrust.org.uk

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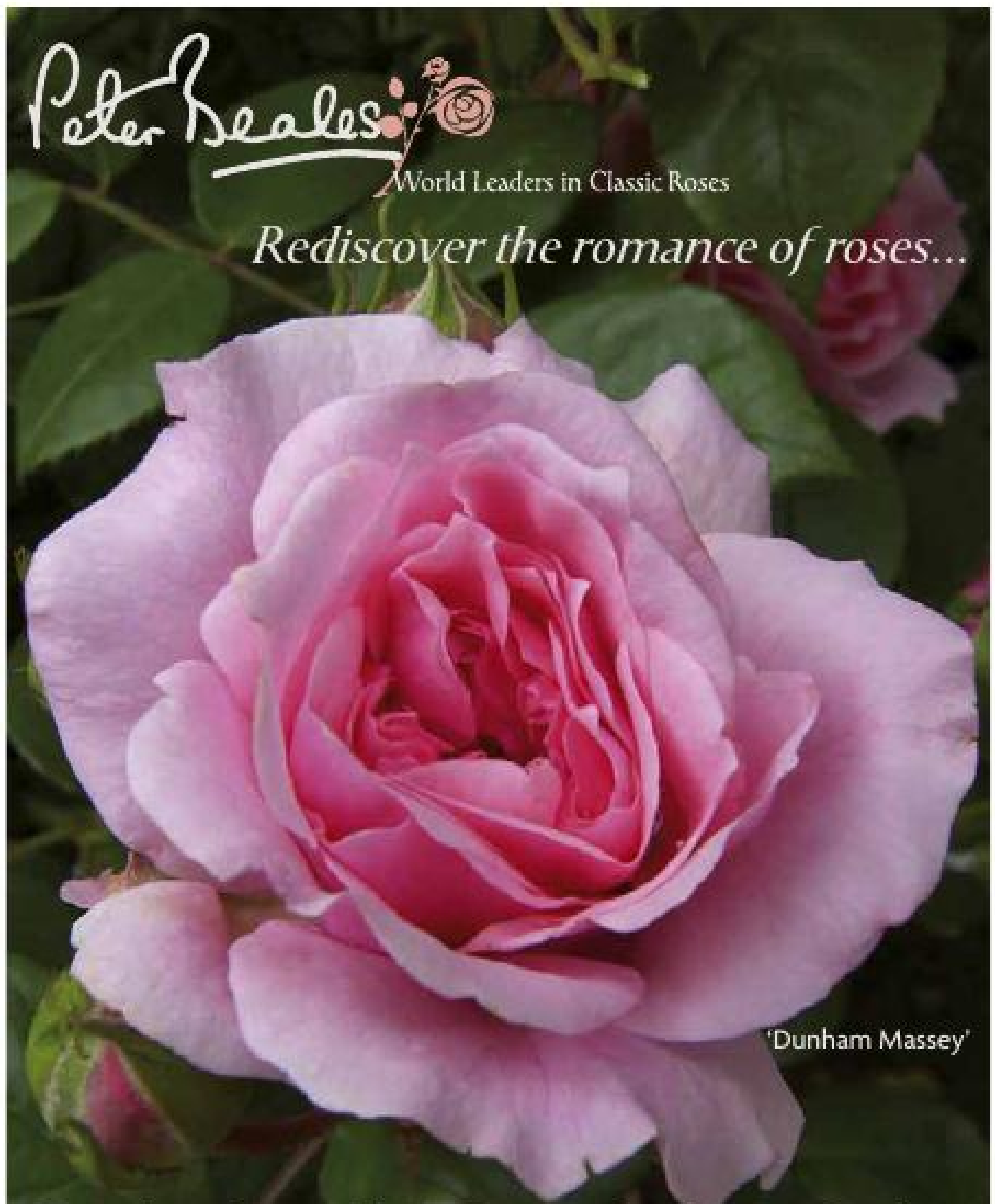
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EXCLUSIVE READER DAY

Readers' day at Gravetye Manor

The New English Garden

Visit the home of pioneering Victorian gardener William Robinson and learn how his naturalistic style of planting changed the way we garden and how our gardens look

In terms of England's gardening heritage, Gravetye Manor is key. Following our feature on the garden last month (issue 197, page 62) we're now offering readers the opportunity to discover for themselves more of the garden's history and its glorious restoration that places it as one of the up-and-coming 'new English gardens'. Tucked deep in the Sussex countryside, Gravetye's most notable past owner was William Robinson, an established garden writer, whose – at the time – controversial ideas for a more naturalistic approach to gardening were put into practice at Gravetye.

Your day begins with head gardener Tom Coward and writer Tim Richardson talking about William Robinson and his gardening legacy. You'll then enjoy a champagne reception and delicious three-course lunch from the hotel's award-winning kitchen, followed by a guided tour of the gardens in the afternoon to consider how Robinson's ideas worked in practice and see how Tom is developing the gardens for the 21st century. The day finishes on the terrace for a cup of tea and slice of cake.

THE SPEAKERS

TIM RICHARDSON is a writer and garden critic. His new book *The New English Garden* looks at those gardens made – or remade – in the last decade that define England's current garden style.

TOM COWARD worked at Great Dixter before becoming Gravetye's head gardener. His focus is to conserve Robinson's work while progressing the garden in a continued spirit of experimentation.

RACHEL WARNE

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* Calls to this number from a BT landline will cost no more than 5p per minute. Calls from mobiles and other providers may visit. For more details about Gravetye go to www.gravetyemanor.co.uk

DATE

Saturday 21 September, 2013

HELD AT

Gravetye Manor, Vowels Lane,
West Hoathly, Sussex RH19 4LJ

PROGRAMME

9.45am Arrival and coffee

10am Talk by Tim Richardson on the New English Garden

11.30am Head gardener Tom Coward talks about Gravetye past, present and future

12.45pm Champagne Taittinger reception followed by lunch

2.30pm Garden tours

4pm Tea and cake on the terrace

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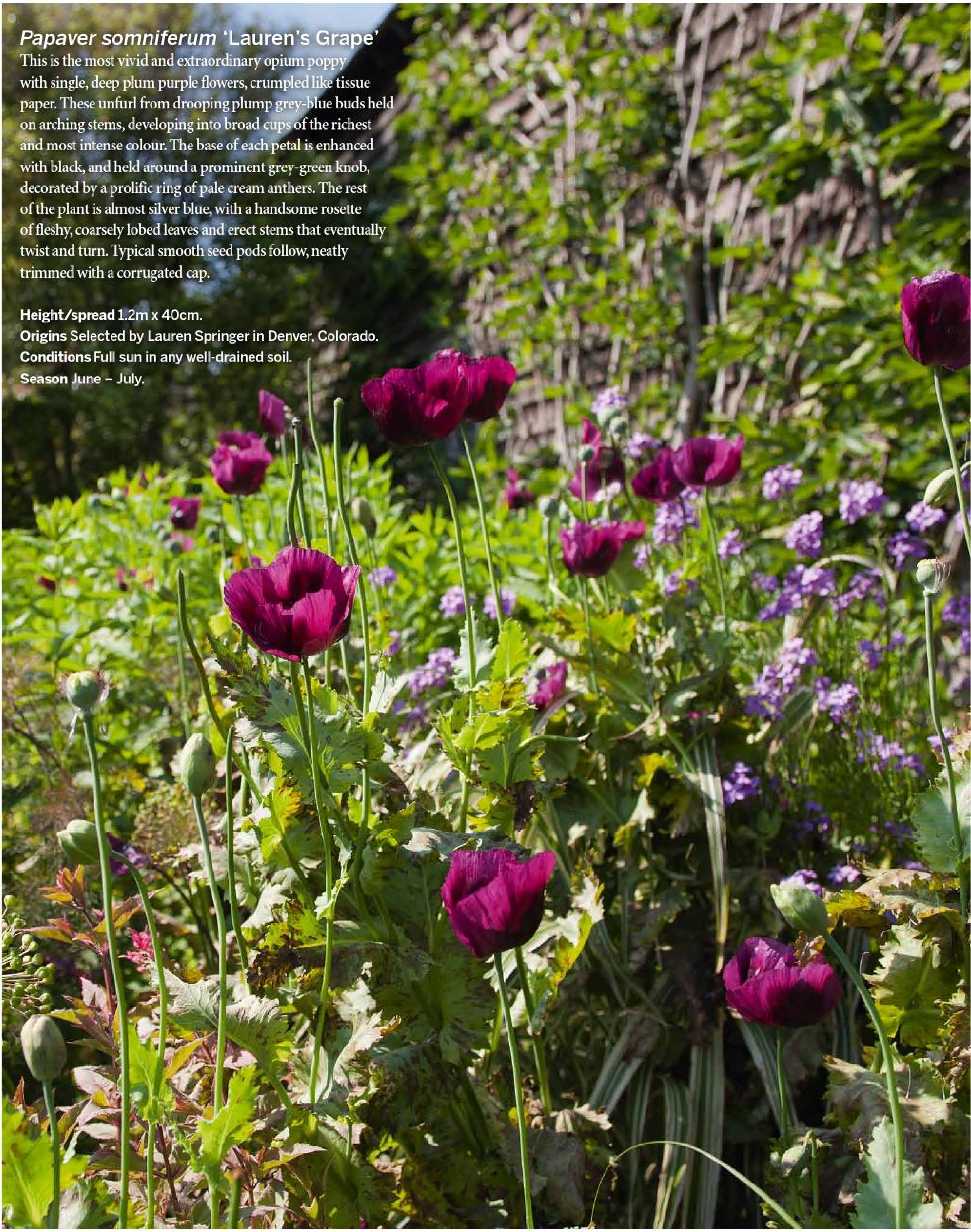


Papaver somniferum 'Lauren's Grape'

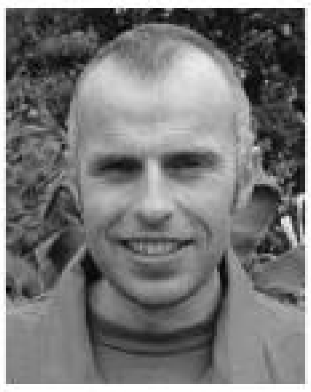
This is the most vivid and extraordinary opium poppy with single, deep plum purple flowers, crumpled like tissue paper. These unfurl from drooping plump grey-blue buds held on arching stems, developing into broad cups of the richest and most intense colour. The base of each petal is enhanced with black, and held around a prominent grey-green knob, decorated by a prolific ring of pale cream anthers. The rest of the plant is almost silver blue, with a handsome rosette of fleshy, coarsely lobed leaves and erect stems that eventually twist and turn. Typical smooth seed pods follow, neatly trimmed with a corrugated cap.

Height/spread 1.2m x 40cm.
Origins Selected by Lauren Springer in Denver, Colorado.
Conditions Full sun in any well-drained soil.
Season June – July.

June plants

The summer is all about vivid colour and glorious greenery. Great Dixter's head gardener recommends the plants good for this month

WORDS **FERGUS GARRETT** PHOTOGRAPHS **SHARON PEARSON**

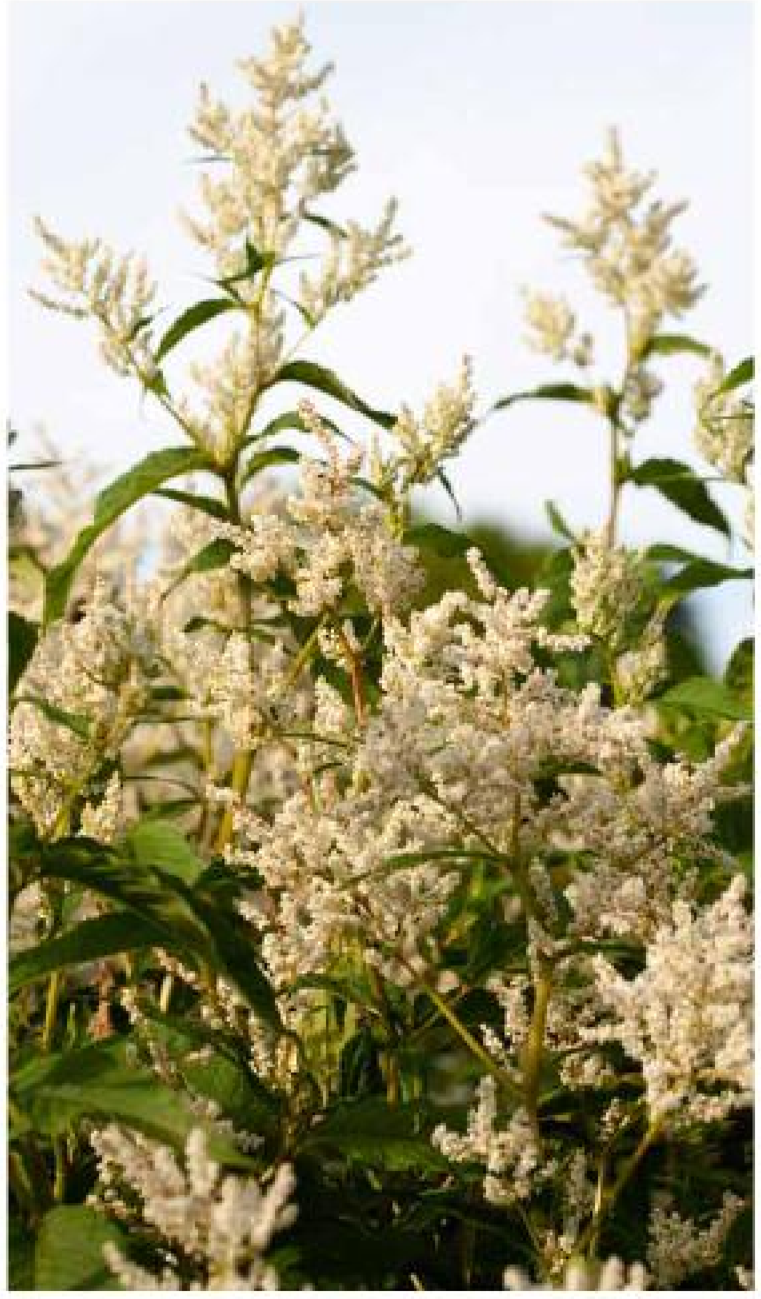


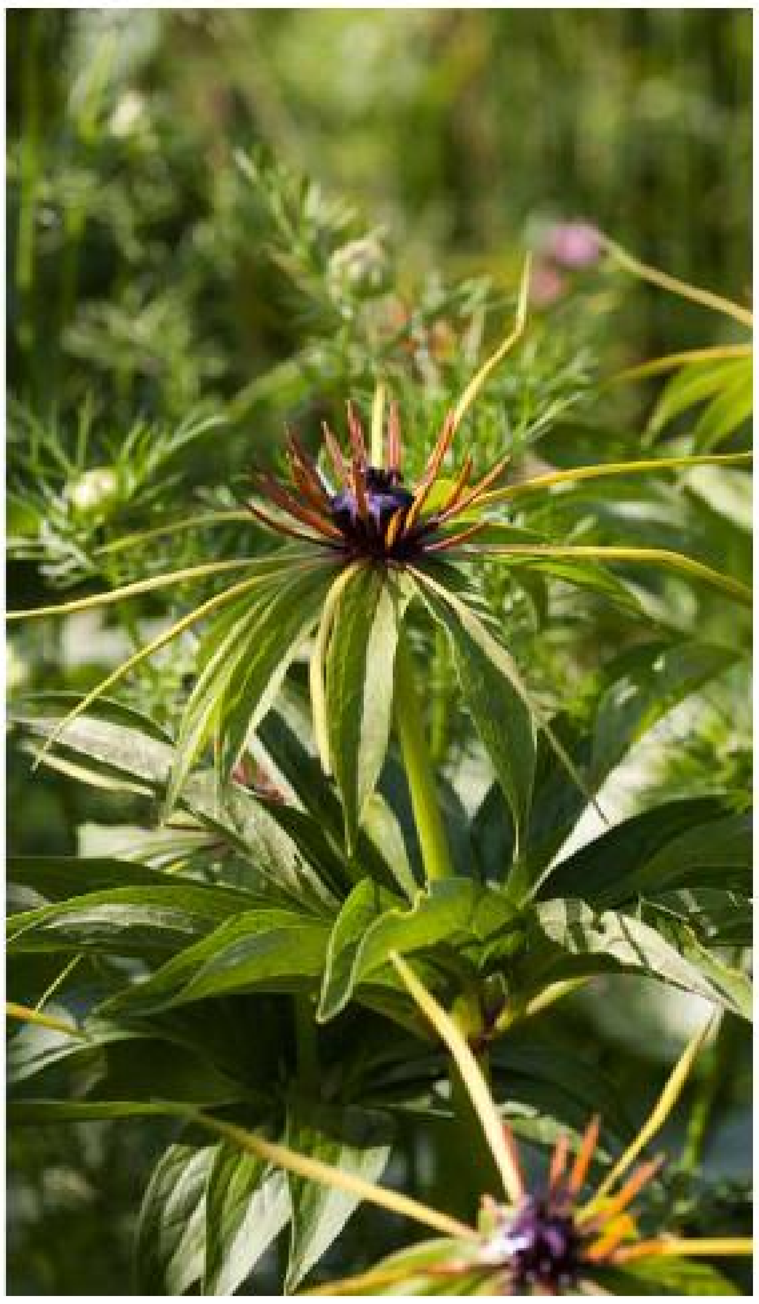
Fergus Garrett is a plantsman and head gardener at Great Dixter in East Sussex. He also lectures, writes and serves on Royal Horticultural Society committees

Persicaria x fennica

A strong-growing hardy perennial with long, pointed lanceolate leaves, furnishing cane-like stems, each carrying branches of loose upright panicles littered in white flowers. Has a tall and wide frame decorated in dense froths of large blooms that only fade to a muddy pink in September. Clump-forming and surprisingly not at all invasive, but often given bad press due to mistaken identity. Looks amazing sandwiched between the yellow leaves of *Ligustrum* 'Vicaryi' and the cut-leaved black elder *Sambucus nigra* f. *porphyrophylla* 'Eva'.

Height/spread 2m x 2m.
Origins Bred in cultivation.
Conditions Sun or part-shade in good soils.
Hardiness rating USDA 5a-9b[†].
Season June – September.





Paris polyphylla

A hardy perennial with whorls of bold green lanceolate leaves arching like umbrellas on silky smooth upright stems. Each of these terminates in a strange and complex flower made up of a ruff of leaf-like broad green sepals and several thin and dainty golden thread-like petals resembling the long antennae of jewel wasps. A further ring of chunky rusty lime-green stamens radiate from the pistil, which sits at the centre of the flower. Flowers last the whole summer before the central capsule splits open to reveal a cluster of spectacular bright scarlet fruit.

Height/spread 1m x 0.6m.
Origins Himalayas, northern India, China.
Conditions Moist humus-rich soil in full or part shade.
Hardiness rating USDA 5a-9b.
Season June – October.

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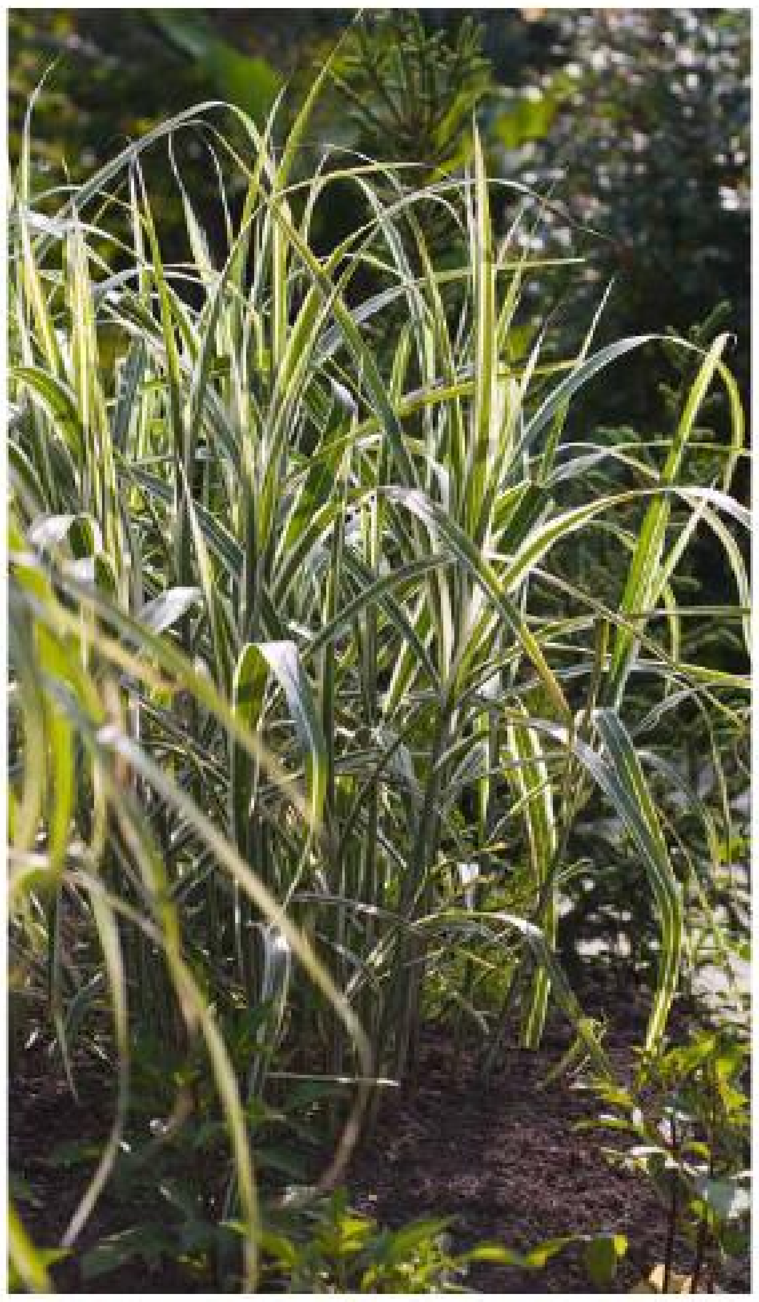
*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society

[†] Hardiness ratings given where available



Miscanthus sinensis var. *condensatus* 'Cosmopolitan'

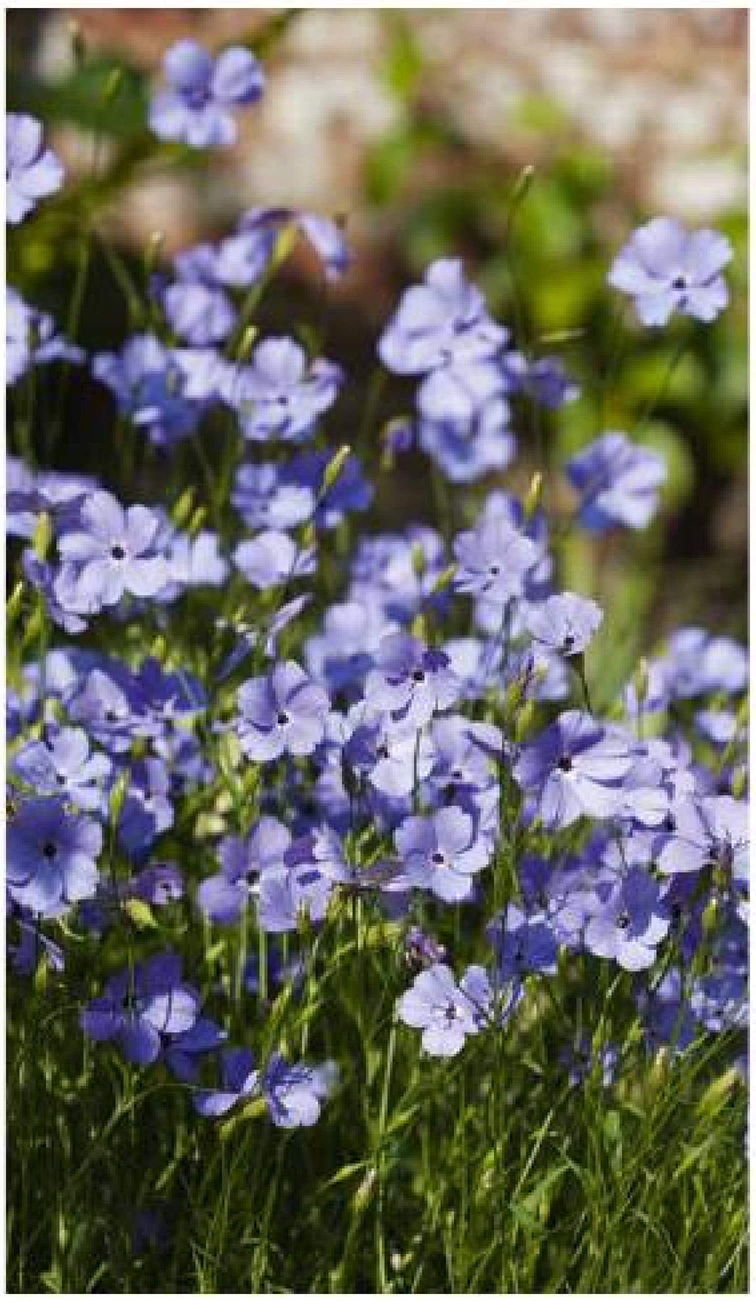
Muscular, clump-forming grass, with a body of broad, flat, outwardly arching variegated leaves streaked in vertical stripes of white and green. Tall and wide, it rustles in the slightest wind even though its stems are robust and self-supporting. Silvery pink tassels appear at the end of the season although regular flowering cannot be relied on as our summers often lack the necessary punch. Strong growing and architectural yet graceful and elegant, adding movement to a border. Foliage bleaches tan for winter.

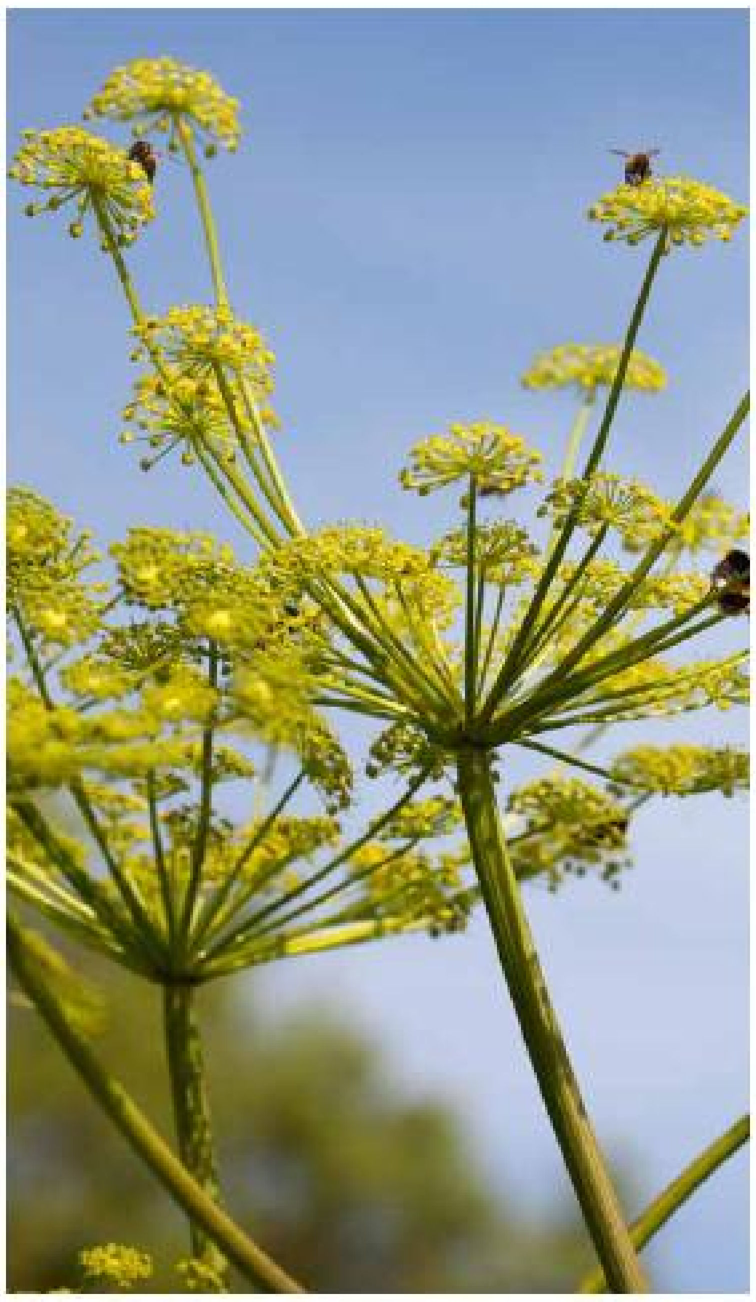
Height/spread 2.5m x 2m. AGM*.
Origins Discovered in Japan in the 1940s.
Conditions Wet or moist soil, will thrive in swampy conditions in sun or part shade.
Hardiness rating RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.
Season May – December.

Silene coeli-rosa 'Blue Angel'

A wonderful annual, hugging the ground with tussocky rosettes of grey-green leaves, above which float a dense tangle of smooth upright stems carrying a profusion of flowers in the most stirring shade of vivid blue. Each flower is approximately 3cm across and made up of a flat disc of five petals each notched at the tip and joined in the centre by a distinct black eye. Showy over a long season and dainty enough to run through empty spaces among perennials, imitating self-sowing. Mixes well with *Lychnis coronaria* and *Eryngium giganteum*.

Height/spread 40cm x 25cm.
Origins The species is a native of SW Europe, east to Sicily, and N Africa.
Conditions Full sun in good garden soil.
Hardiness rating USDA 3a-5b.
Season June – July.





Thapsia villosa

An airy and architectural umbellifer with soft, hairy, grey-green, triangular, dissected pinnate leaves and robust downy stems that carry compound umbels of a dozen or more spokes, each with globose galaxies of up to 40 small yellow flowers. The emerging clusters are wrapped in sheaths that split open as the inflorescences expand. Bright green, striated, oval seeds with translucent wings follow. These fade brown as the plant retreats into tubers underground. Known as villous deadly carrot, and traditionally used by Catalonian fishermen for stunning their catch. Has intriguing medicinal qualities.

Height/spread 1.2m x 60cm.
Origins Native of Southern France to Spain, Portugal and Gibraltar to NW Africa.
Conditions Full sun in well-drained soil.
Season June – August.

Places to visit

Fergus shares some of his favourite places to see plants at their best.

De Hessenhof Nursery, Netherlands Hans and Miranda Kramer have one of the best nurseries in Europe. They have an exceptional eye for a good plant and offer many superior clones, and rare and unusual forms. This visit is a must for anyone interested in plants – you'll find a large selection and will not be disappointed. Nursery open from 1 March – 6 November, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, 9am-5pm.
Kwekerij De Hessenhof,
Hessenweg, 41 Ede,
Gelderland, 6718 TC,
The Netherlands.
www.hessenhof.nl

Inverewe garden, National Trust for Scotland.

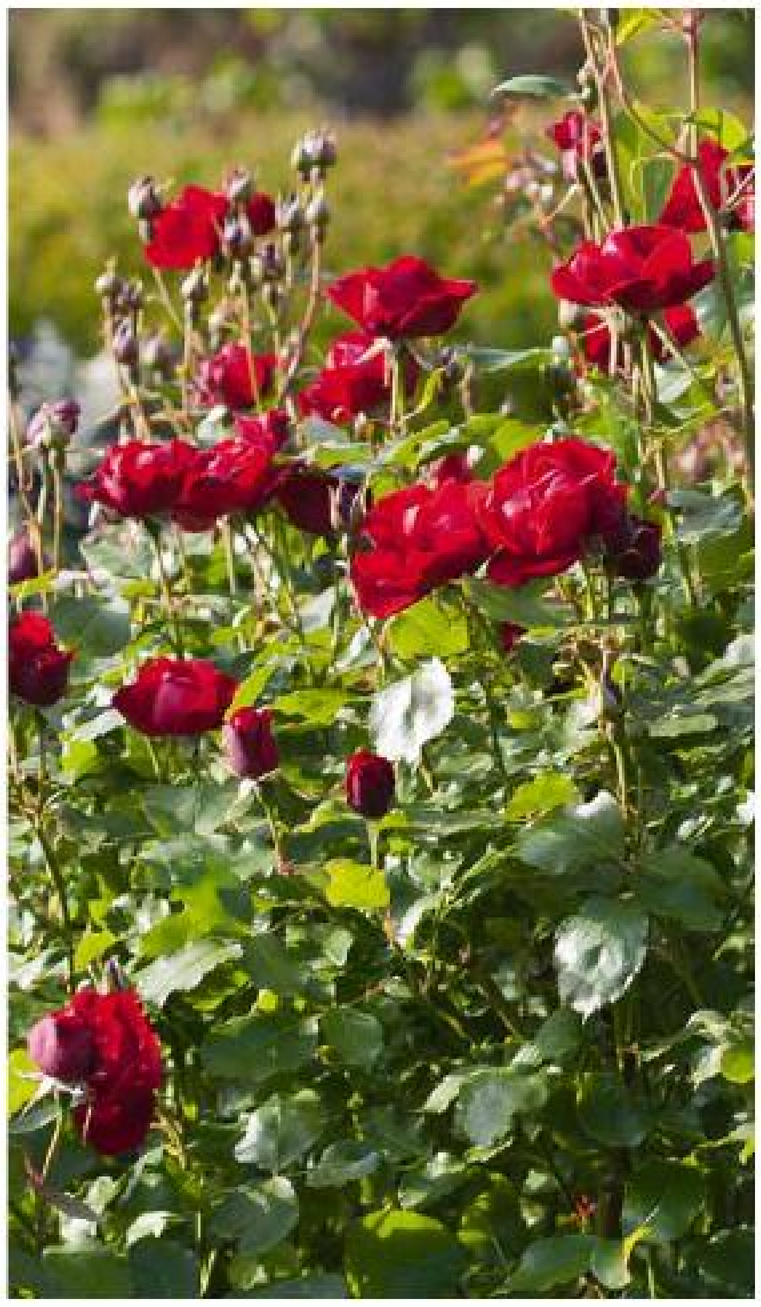
MARK A. JOHNSON / ALAMY

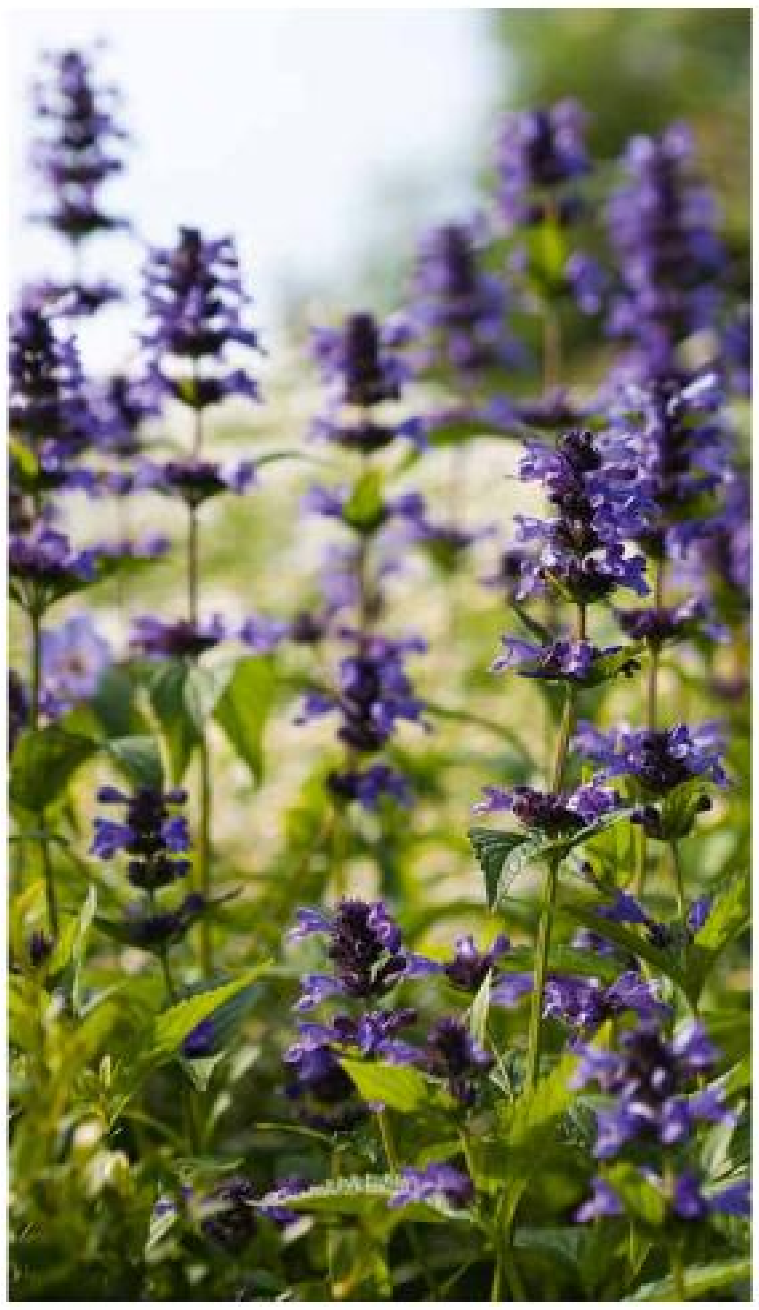
Inverewe Garden, National Trust for Scotland Created in 1862 by Osgood Mackenzie and now owned by the National Trust for Scotland, the garden at Inverewe covers about 50 acres set among beautiful

Rosa 'Florence Mary Morse'

Bred in 1951 by Reimer Kordes, a German breeder who was also responsible for 'Iceberg', one of the most successful roses of all time. Has raggedy, somewhat messy, open-centred, semi-double flowers, and lacks the heavenly scent expected of old roses. Nevertheless, it more than makes up for its flaws with abundant clusters of rich pillarbox-red flowers produced repeatedly over the summer and autumn. Slightly stiff in habit, it mixes well with other ingredients and in Great Dixter's famous Long Border, it is the only permanent plant to be repeated four times – a true testament to its qualities.

Height/spread 2m x 1.5m.
Origins W Kordes & Sons. Cross between 'Chateau' and 'Magnifica'.
Conditions Best in full sun in good soil.
Season June – November.





Nepeta kubanica

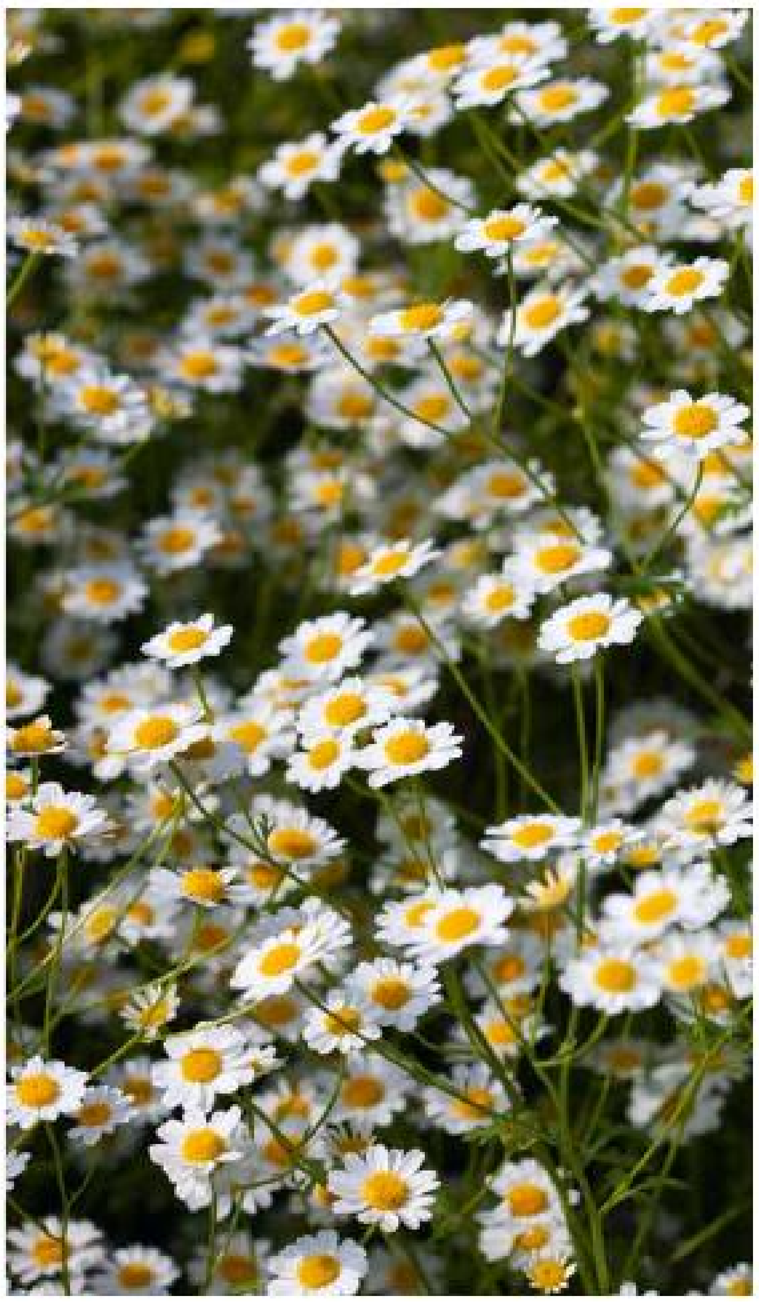
A handsome, rugged perennial catmint with an upright habit, given to us by nurseryman Hans Kramer. *Nepeta kubanica* is taller, bolder, and more dramatic than *Nepeta subsessilis*. Green, deeply veined, and conspicuously serrated lance-shaped leaves hang off a columnar body, above which stand chunky spikes of violet-blue flowers, densely arranged in tightly packed whorls and held in dark calyxes. The flowers are typically hooded and lobed and slightly speckled in the throat. Loved by bees and looks super contrasted with white *Anthemis* 'Cally Cream' and mottled orange bronze of *Helenium* 'Sahin's Early Flowerer'.

Height/spread 1m x 50cm.
Origins Moldova and the Caucasus.
Conditions Full sun in any well-drained soil.
Season June – August.

Tanacetum niveum

A relatively short-lived perennial with neat, low mounds of chrysanthemum-like, grey-green aromatic foliage, from which rises branching, stiff stems that erupt into a dazzling mass of small white daisies. The dramatic, undulating mound of flowers is so full that it obscures the rest of the plant, making an ideal backdrop for darker companions such as violet-mauve *Nepeta kubanica*. Supposedly reblooms if given a severe haircut after flowering. Plants often succumb to cold, wet winters but propagation is easy from seed or cuttings.

Height/spread 90cm x 60cm.
Origins From the Caucasus (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia).
Conditions Well-drained soil in full sun.
Hardiness rating USDA 4a-9b.
Season June – July.



scenery. Warmed by the Gulf Stream, the garden has over 2,500 exotic plants and flowers. Said to be exceptional at rhododendron time, but I've always enjoyed it in the summer. The gardens are open all summer. www.gardens-scotland.co.uk/inverewe.html

Hermannshof, Germany Of all the gardens I've visited to see naturalistic planting, this is the one that has excited me most. Redesigned in the 1980s to showcase the New Perennial movement in Germany, I first visited in the early 1990s when it was under the directorship of Urs Walser. Now it is the playground of the talented Cassian Schmidt. Open all year. 10am-7pm in summer, 10am-4pm, Monday–Friday in winter. Babostrasse 5, 69469 Weinheim, Bergstrasse, SW Germany.

Rousham This is a fine example of William Kent's (1685-1748) work and shows the English Landscape design movement in its early stages. The house was built in 1635 by Sir Robert Dormer and is still under the ownership of the same family. The place has an extraordinary atmosphere and has long been a favourite. Rousham House, Rousham, Bicester, Oxfordshire OX25 4QU. Tel 01869 347110, www.rousham.org

MARIANNE MAJERUS

Naturalistic planting at Hermannshof, Germany.

The journey is just the start of the *adventure*

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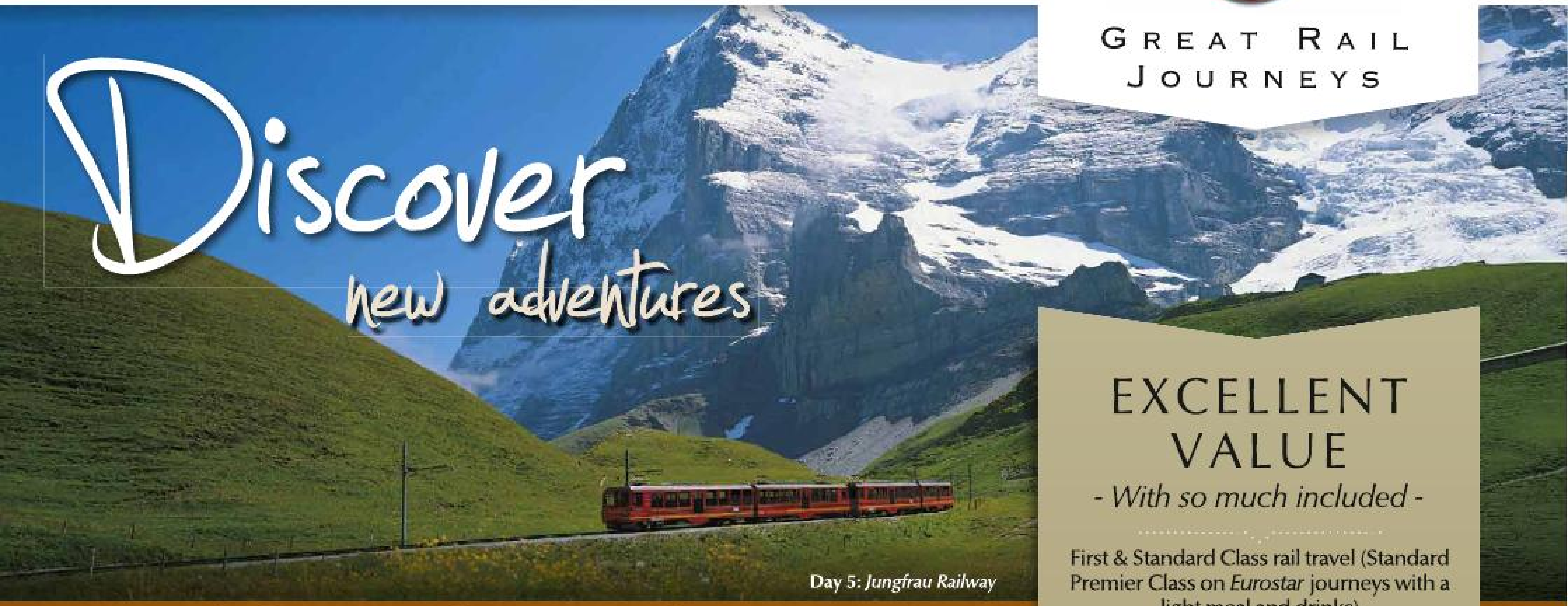

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Day 3: Interlaken. Today is free for enjoying Interlaken at leisure or exploring with the included Bernese Oberland Regional Pass, which offers 50% fares on most trains and buses.

Day 4: *Brienz-Rothorn Railway* and lake cruise. Travel by train along the shores of Lake Brienz to take the steam mountain railway, to the summit of Rothorn. At over 5,000 feet (1,524m), the views are spectacular and the return to Interlaken is via Brienz and a lake cruise.

Day 5: To the Jungfraujoch. Experience the incredible *Jungfrau Railway* to Europe's highest railway station at 11,333 feet (3,454m). Begin on the *Bernese Oberland Railway* to Lauterbrunnen, continuing to Kleine Scheidegg to join the *Jungfrau Railway* to continue into the mountains and through the Eiger tunnel to Jungfraujoch. There is time to admire the breathtaking views and visit the labyrinth of sculptured glacial ice caves before returning via the pretty town of Grindelwald.

Day 6: A day at leisure. Today is free to explore, perhaps travel by train around Lake Thun to historic Spiez, dominated by a medieval lakeside castle and tucked beneath towering mountains.

Day 7: Lake Thun cruise. Cruise across Lake Thun to visit the town of Thun enjoying free time to explore the cobbled streets and the 12th century castle.

Day 8: A day at leisure. Today is free for relaxing or further exploring the Bernese Oberland before a farewell dinner.

Days 9-10: Home. Depart by train, via Basel and through the picturesque Rhine Gorge to Cologne for an overnight stay. Continue to Brussels and join the *Eurostar* to London.

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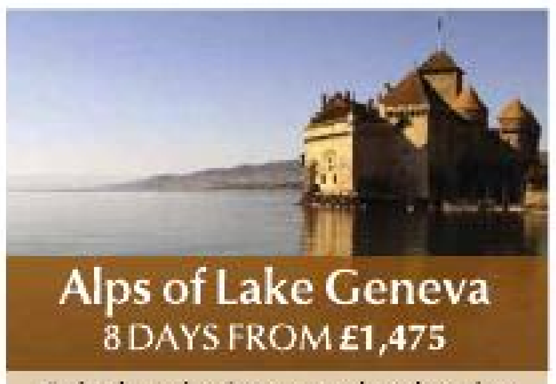

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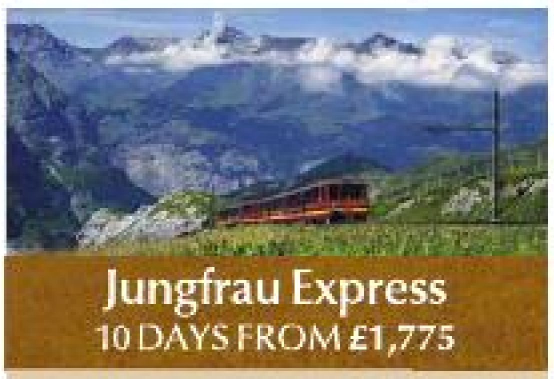

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Green means go

Your garden should now be dressed in shades of green, which means there's no time to relax – filling gaps, watering and pest control must all be attended to

WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** ILLUSTRATION **PETRA BÖRNER**

Hunt down fillers

There is no excuse for bare beds in June. This is a time when you should have heavenly froth in multiple greens everywhere. If nothing else, June should be sprawling geraniums and bubbling alchemilla. Both are generous enough with themselves that should you start with a single plant you will soon have a garden full, so this is a great time to look around and choose favourite geranium shades. I have the intense blue-purple *G.* 'Johnson's Blue' and the softer and dreamier blue *G. pratense*. Filch a plant or two of alchemilla from a neighbour (if they have it they will have enough to spare).

Utilise downpours

If there are summer downpours – and there usually are – then at least make sure you have a way of capturing the rain water, to see you through the dryer patches. I've got big water butts coming off drainpipes at the front and back of the house, and as well as giving me a glowing halo and a self-satisfied grin, they have made watering exponentially easier. The water is where I need it and front garden hanging baskets are marginally less neglected than they used to be. The task for the next dry patch (there is much unintentional comedy to be had dealing with guttering when it's raining) is to hook my greenhouse up to a water butt too. No more can lugging for me.

Nip aphids in the bud

One of the alarming sights of early summer is a sudden proliferation of aphids covering rose buds and other soft bits of growth like a plague of locusts. I'm showing off a little but it's something that happens less and less often as my garden matures and I reckon there is a balance slowly being achieved: there is a pay-off for not spraying with chemicals and for making homes for beneficial insects. This is my reward. In newer gardens though it can be a pain, leaving flower buds twisted, so keep an eye out and squish on sight, as they reproduce rapidly. An occasional drenching with cooled dishwater can also do a good job.

Things to do

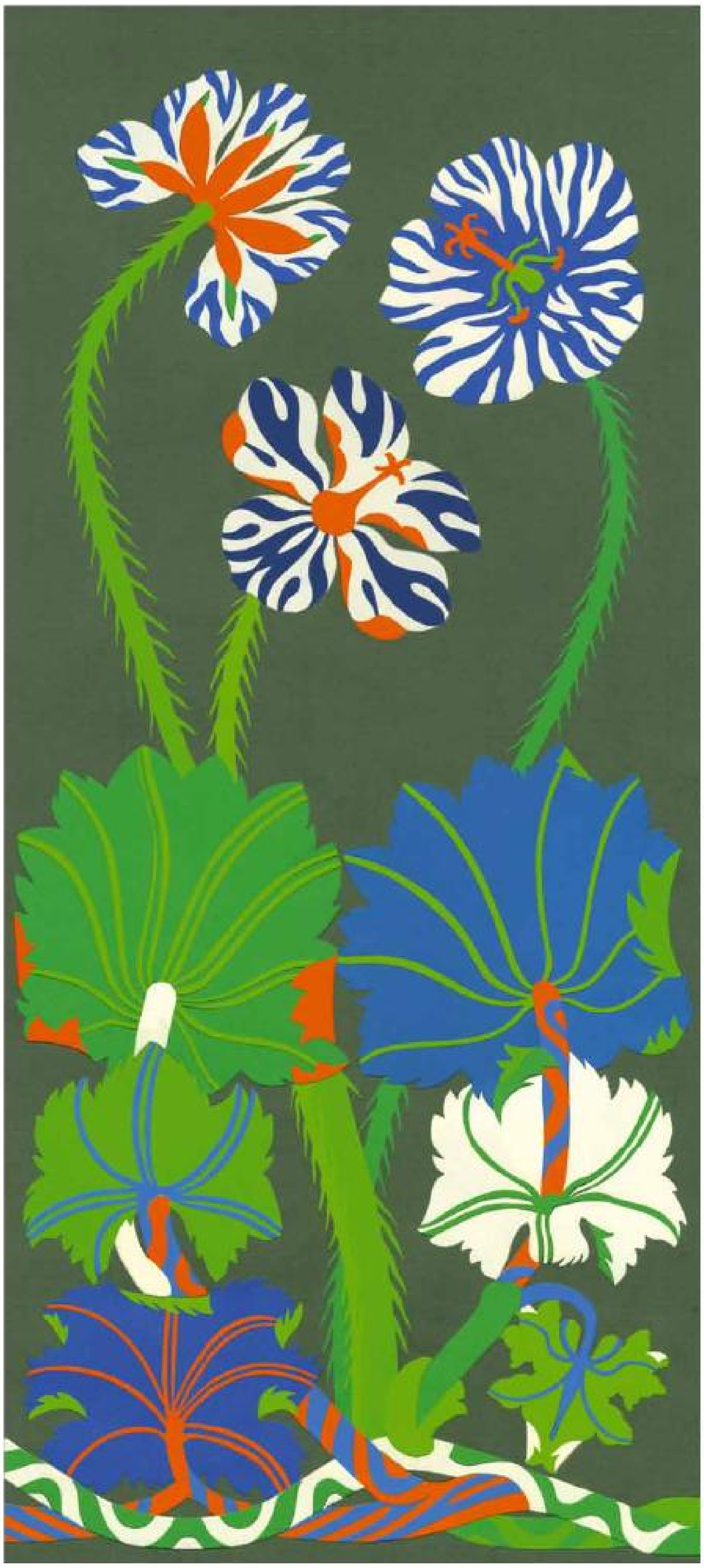
When composting lawn clippings mix them in with lots of cardboard, otherwise they will turn slimy.

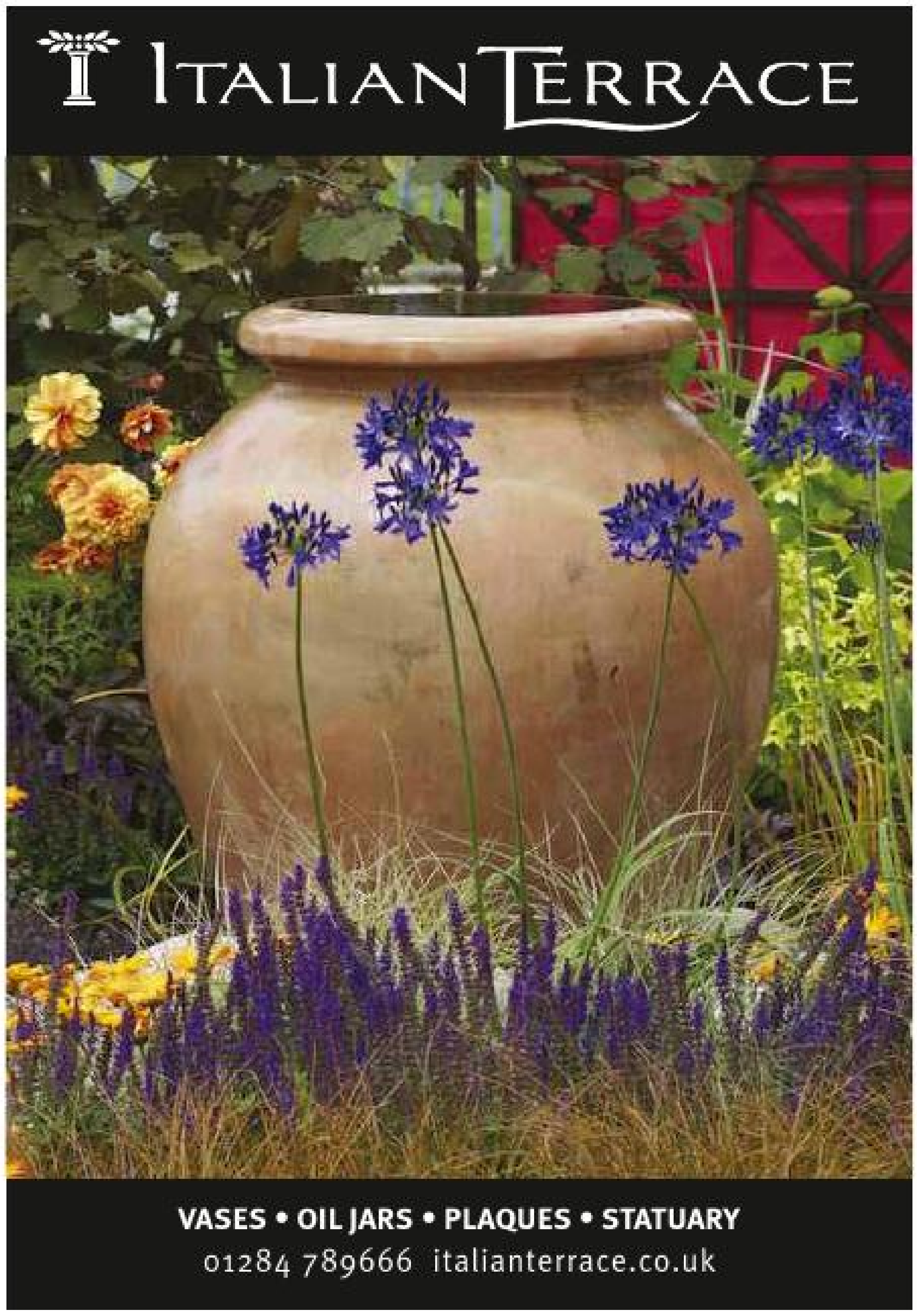
Trim box topiary shapes and then feed and water.

French beans, sweet corn and courgettes can now be direct sown, as the soil is warm and they are quick to produce.

Sharpen your hoe and run it across bare soil regularly to prevent weeds getting out of control.

Pinch out the sideshoots on your tomatoes.





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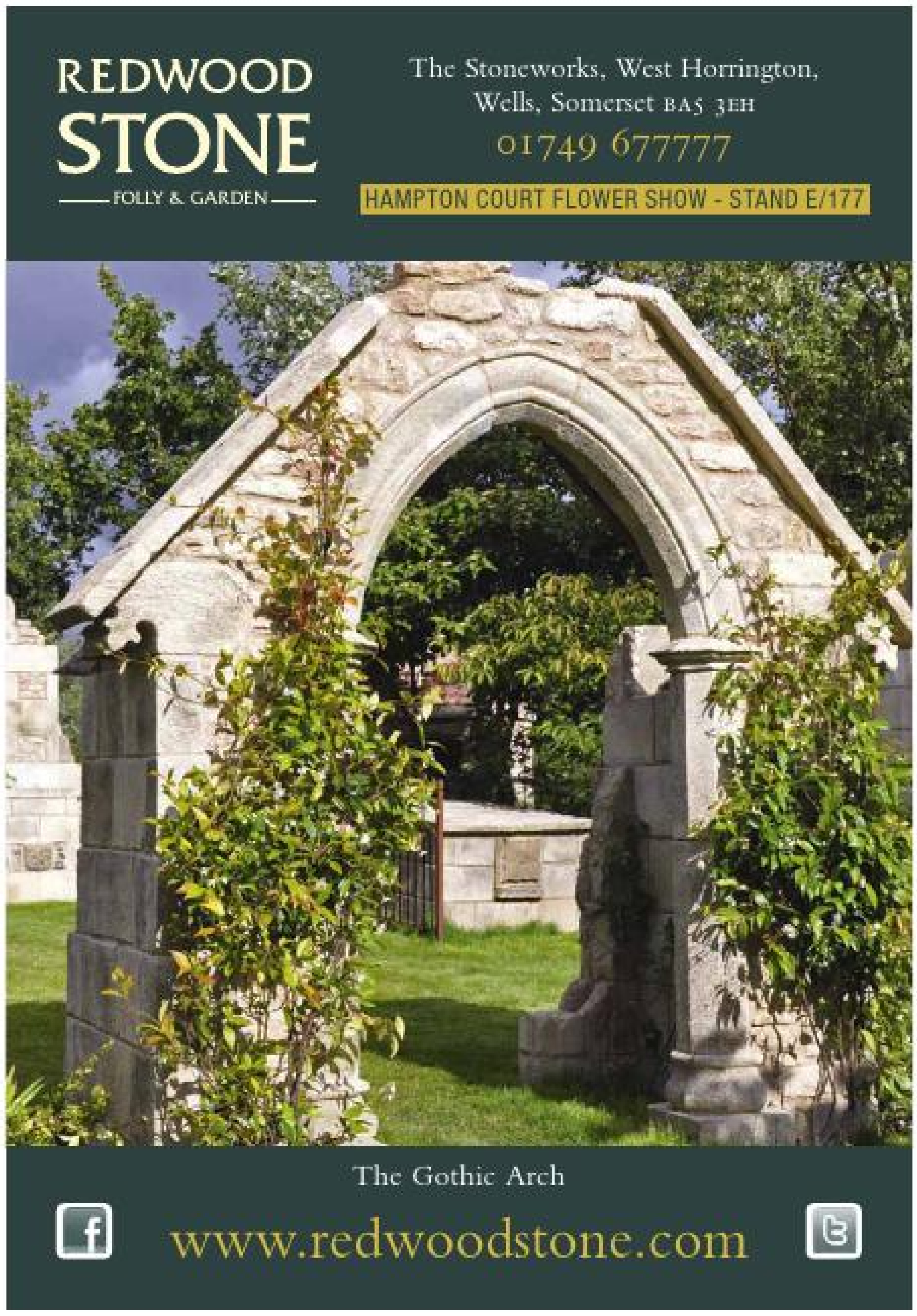

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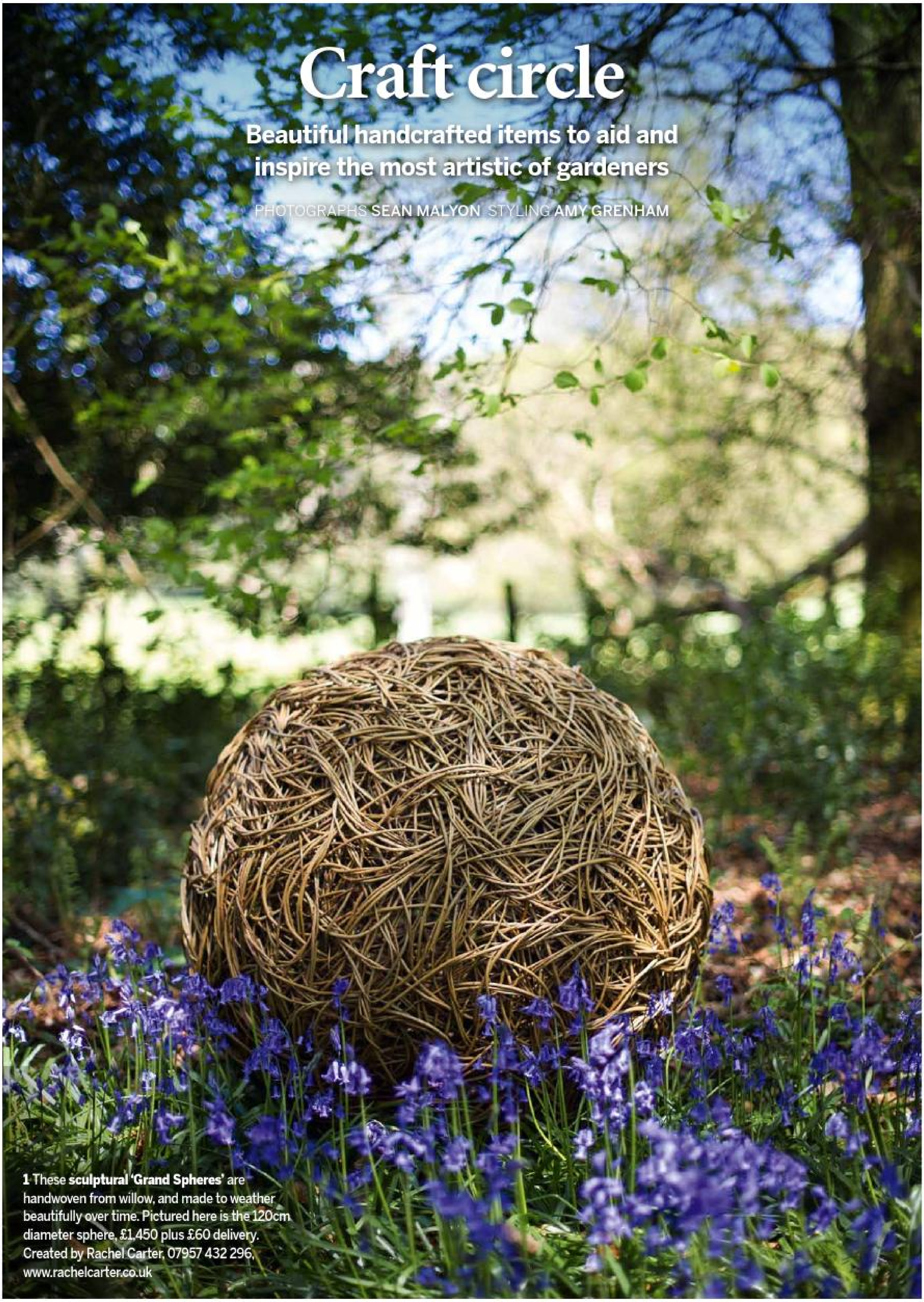
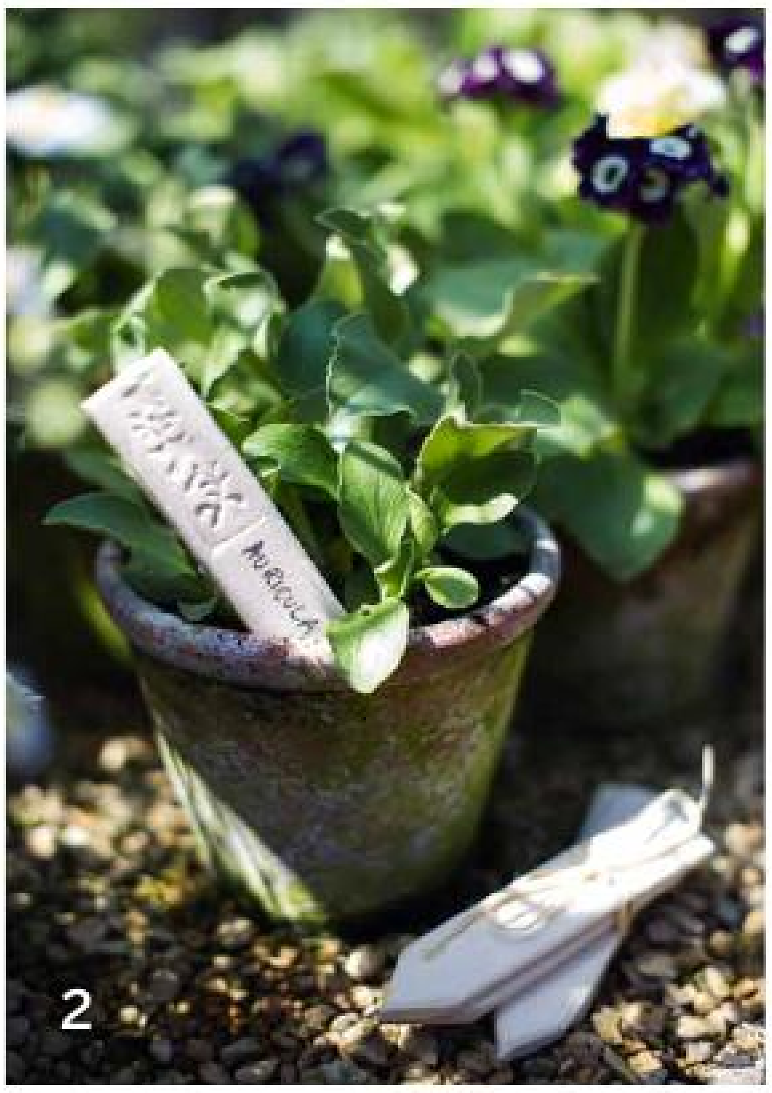


1 These **sculptural 'Grand Spheres'** are handwoven from willow, and made to weather beautifully over time. Pictured here is the 120cm diameter sphere, £1,450 plus £60 delivery. Created by Rachel Carter, 07957 432 296, www.rachelcarter.co.uk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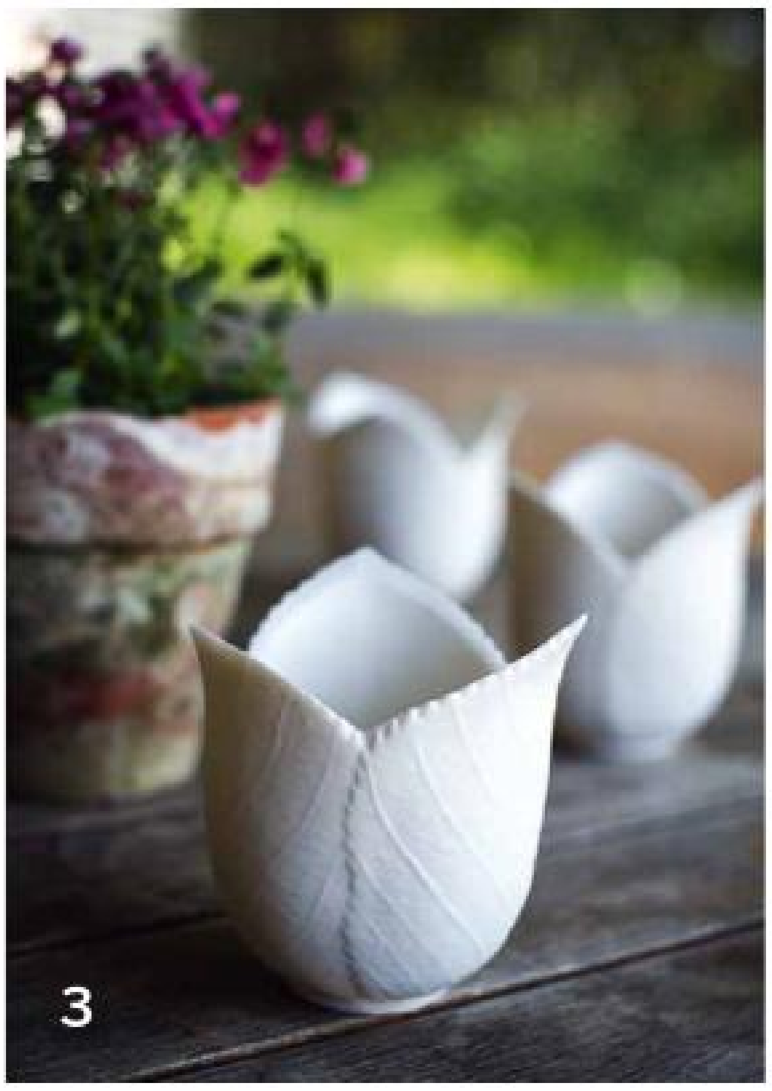
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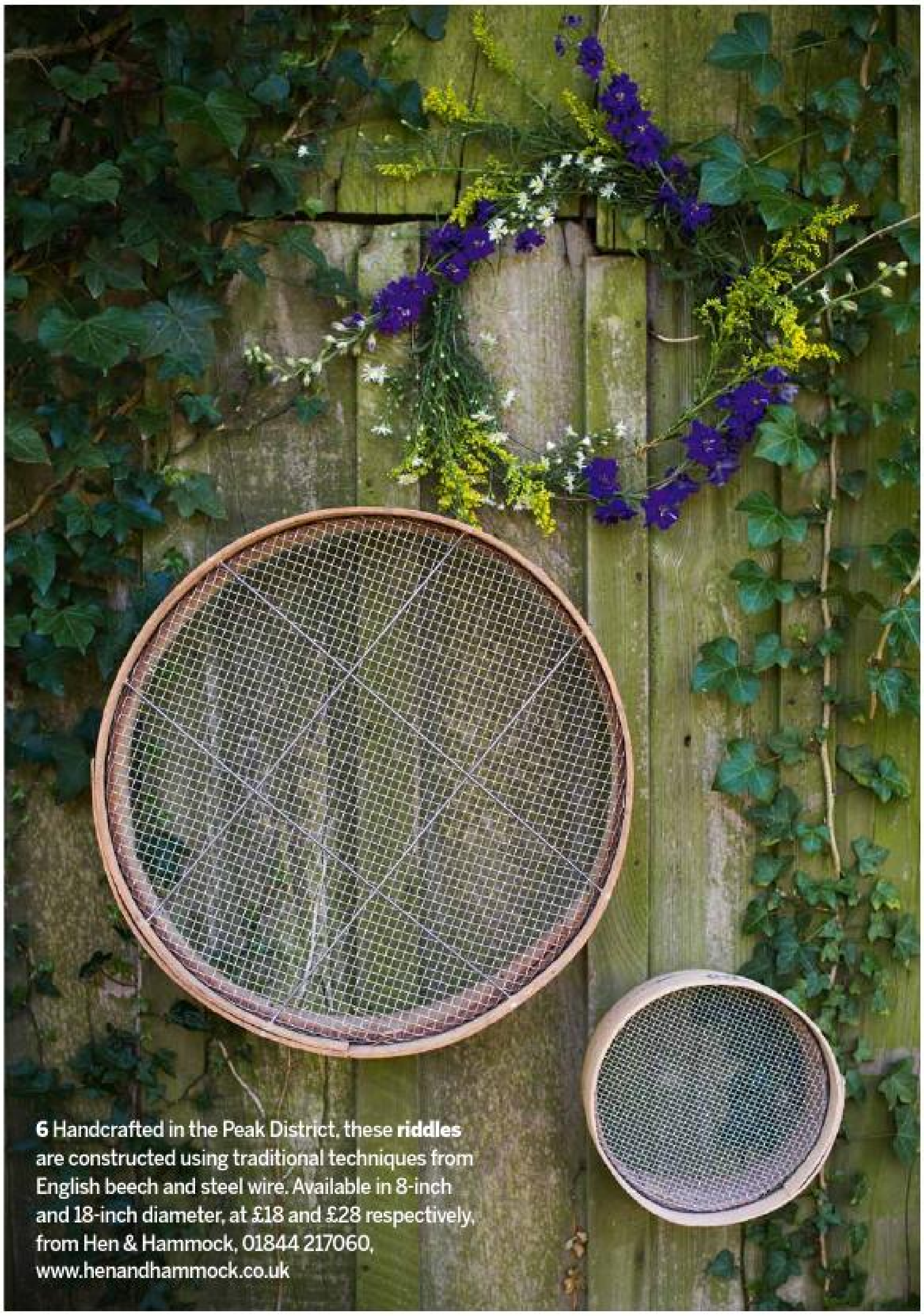
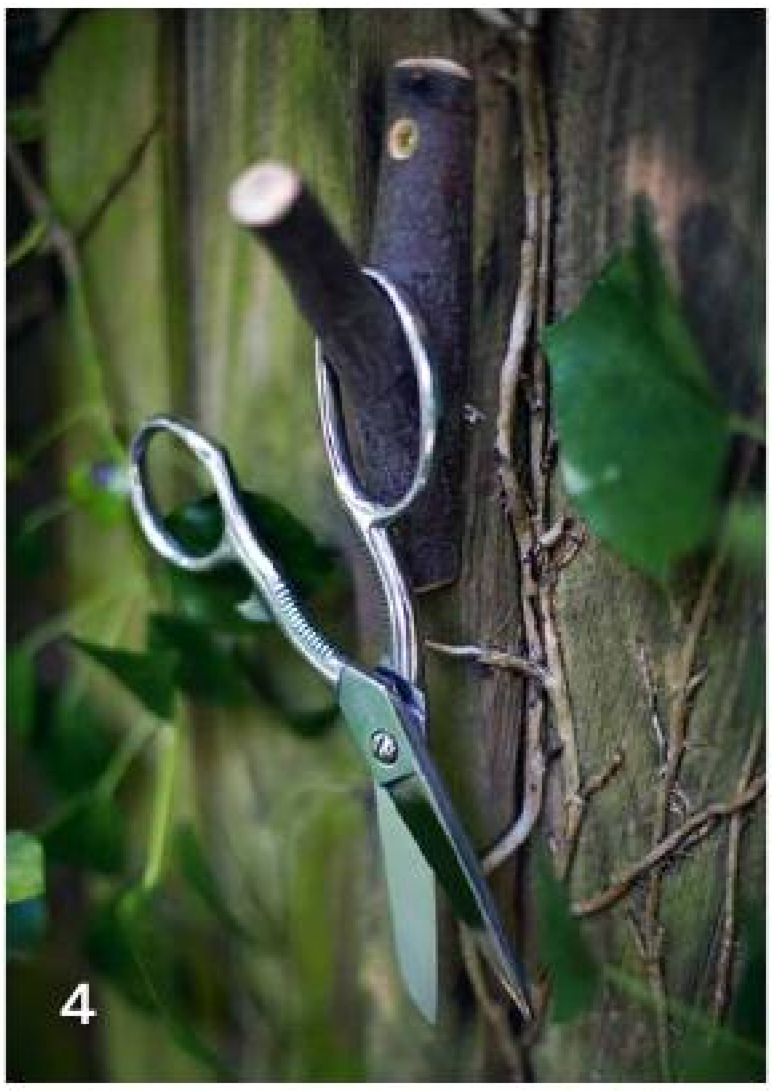

6 Handcrafted in the Peak District, these **riddles** are constructed using traditional techniques from English beech and steel wire. Available in 8-inch and 18-inch diameter, at £18 and £28 respectively, from Hen & Hammock, 01844 217060, www.henandhammock.co.uk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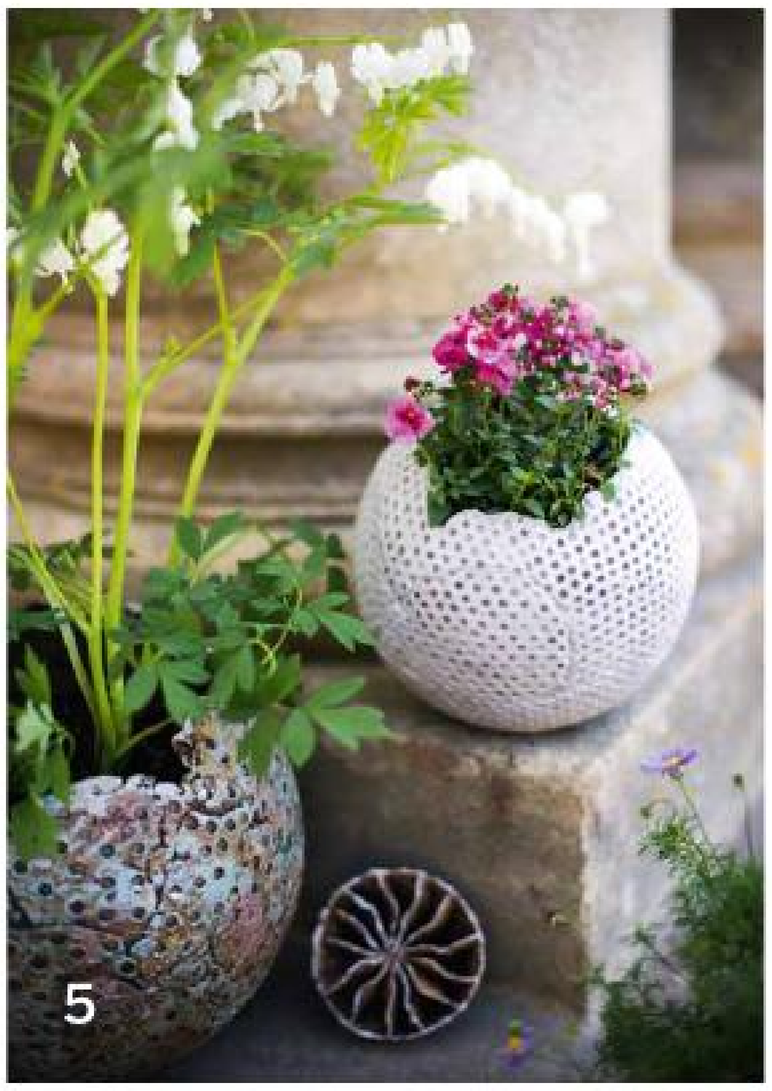
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2 Label your plants with these individually made **stoneware clay markers**. Fired for extra frost resistance, £9 for a pack of four by Little Brick House Ceramics, and available from Not on the High Street. 0845 259 1359, www.notonthehighstreet.com

3 Enjoy your garden in the evening by candlelight with this beautiful porcelain **leaf votive set**, £36.95 for three from Oswells. 01833 630084, www.oswells.co.uk

4 Use a **tree hook** (or 'trook') to keep your garden tools tidy. Fashioned from waste wood, each trook is unique, £9 from Hen & Hammock, see No. 6 for details. Hard wearing, **handmade scissors** with a lifetime guarantee, £40 from Ernest Wright & Son Ltd, 0114 273 9977, www.ernestwright.co.uk

5 Individually created **ceramic planters** are suitable for indoor and outdoor use. Larger planter £30 and smaller size £20. Contact ceramicist Eugénie Goard for details of how to buy, 01452 813727.

Shot on location at Tyntesfield National Trust Estate, Somerset. www.nationaltrust.org.uk

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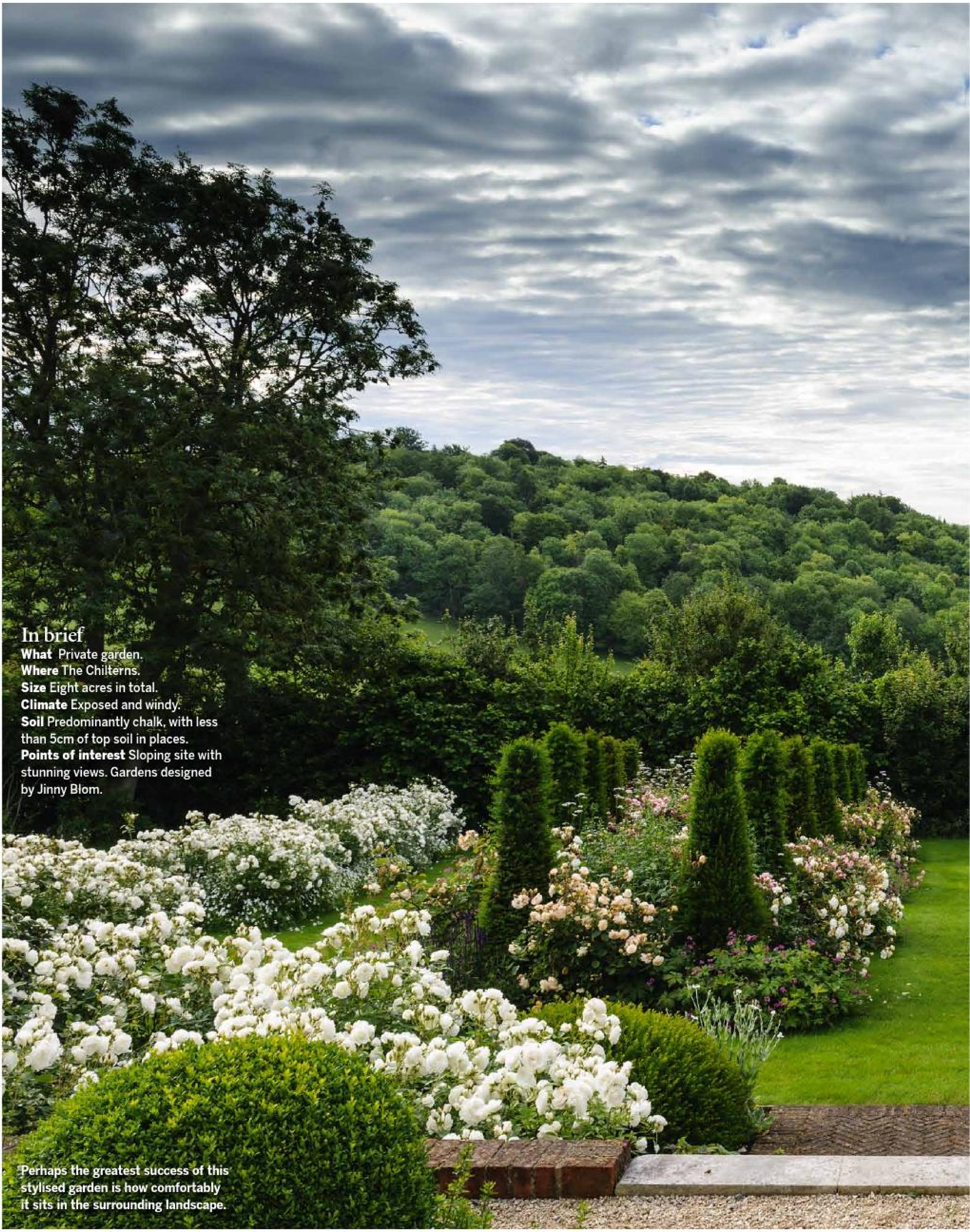


In brief

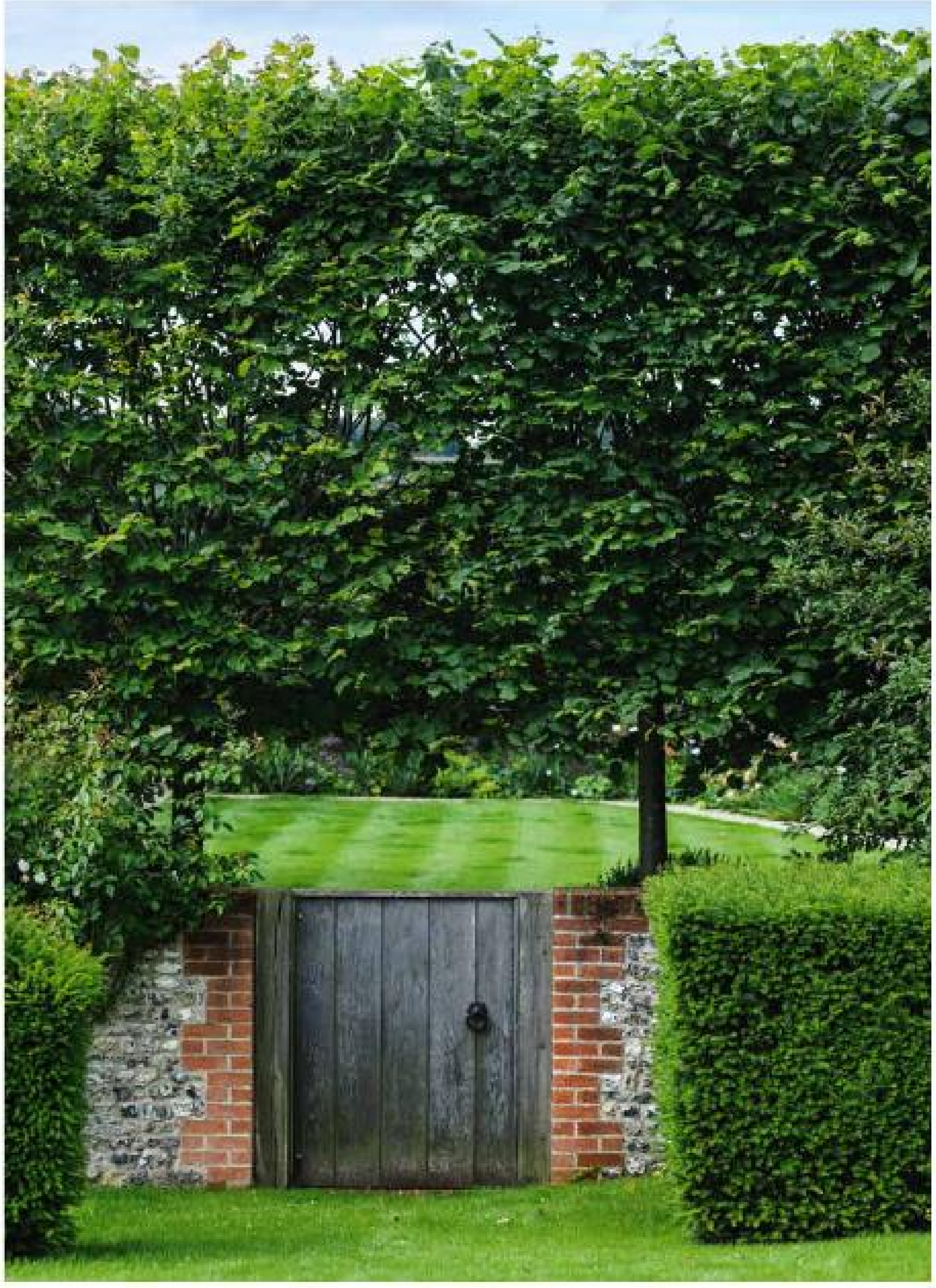
What Private garden.
Where The Chilterns.
Size Eight acres in total.
Climate Exposed and windy.
Soil Predominantly chalk, with less than 5cm of top soil in places.
Points of interest Sloping site with stunning views. Gardens designed by Jinny Blom.

Perhaps the greatest success of this stylised garden is how comfortably it sits in the surrounding landscape.

Clear vision

A nondescript farmyard in the Chilterns has been transformed into something timeless by designer Jinny Blom

WORDS **JODIE JONES** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**



> *"It was a very difficult site, but what Jinny has created is incredible. I honestly don't think it could be bettered"*

There is something magical about the Chilterns. This ancient landscape of chalk escarpments and steeply sloping dry valleys seems untouched by the 21st century, unless the wind is in the right direction to carry the rumble of traffic from the M40.

Perched on the tipping point of one particularly lovely valley lies an eight-acre site that designer Jinny Blom first visited in 2005 at the invitation of Lady Getty, recently widowed and therefore moving from the nearby family estate of Wormsley Park to make way for the next generation.

"I chose Jinny for the job because she has such an original eye and a very individual way of seeing things," says Lady Getty. "It was a very difficult site, but what Jinny has created is incredible. I honestly don't think it could be bettered."

Jinny echoes her client's initial reservations about the site. "When I got here there was really nothing to see – a nasty 1960s house spoiling the remains of a 16th-century farmhouse, insignificant stables, masses of tarmac," she says. "Almost everything was very utilitarian."

However underneath what she describes as "a sea of nothingness", Jinny perceived some strong features, including a charming 17th-century dovecot in flint and tile, several lovely old farm buildings, and a sensational view that makes you feel as if you are flying over the landscape, rather than standing within it.

"My first impulse was to create a sense of enclosure, with glimpsed views leading the eye to the Dower House at the end of the garden. I put in a wonky, wobbly hedge to look like it had been there for ages, and a slightly mad topiary lawn where I positioned mature yew topiary figures in an intentionally random fashion."

To one side of the meandering drive a mini-orchard was planted, where the grass is left to grow long and regularly enriched with native wildflowers, while on the other side an ancient pond was dredged, planted with waterlilies, and surrounded by more rough meadow in which fritillaries thrive.

The house itself was given a similar injection of character by historical architect Ptolemy Dean, who enhanced the 1960s shell with an impressively castellated flint and brick frontage. He and Jinny then conspired to devise a monumental bastion that projects like the prow of a ship out over the tumbling valley, where heritage sheep graze peacefully and massive red kites, recently reintroduced to the area, soar through immense skies.

"I was quite clear there should be no fence here," says Jinny. "I wanted that feeling of perching above the scene." She kept the planting deliberately low key – just ▷

Top left The bastion has been kept simple, almost stark, with no perimeter fence to guard the vertiginous drop to the field below, emphasising the link to the countryside beyond.

Top right A narrow gravel terrace simply planted with box balls and upright rosemary provides a sheltered vantage point from which to admire the garden as it rolls away down the slope.

Bottom left A stilt hedge of pleached limes has been clipped to provide glimpses of the guest house garden over the mellow brick and flint wall.

Bottom right Fronted by the beds of *Rosa* 'Iceberg' (= 'Korbin'), the greenhouse is both a functional space, where vegetables and cutting flowers are raised, and a beautiful focal point in its own right.

> *"I wanted it to be like a medieval illumination, with that false perspective you always get in those ancient manuscripts"*

close-clipped grass, narrow beds of lavender and *Rosa* 'Princesse de Nassau' climbing the house. "I didn't want too many distractions. Your eye should be drawn to the gardens spread out over the slopes below. I wanted it to be like a medieval illumination, with that sense of false perspective you always get in those ancient manuscripts." So instead of levelling out the various garden areas, Jinny chose to embrace the way the land fell away on all sides.

Nearest the bastion she laid out four large rectangular beds punctuated with tall cones of yew, underplanted with a billowing mass of roses and geraniums in those soft purplish hues that generally recede from the eye and increase a sense of distance.

Beyond that, she planted two broad beds filled with bright white *Rosa* Iceberg (='Korbin'), which have precisely the opposite impact, jumping out from their fresh green backdrop to impose themselves on the scene, reinforcing the sense of false perspective.

Above this startling set piece, a narrow gravel terrace edged with box balls and upright rosemary hugs a brick and flint wall, through which an oak gate leads to the unassuming front door of the house, which is flanked by vast lead troughs filled with yet more clipped box. Iris, hollyhocks and erigeron push up through the gravel drive wherever Lady Getty's beloved assortment of dogs will allow them to grow undisturbed, and one more gate leads through to a final walled garden, the most secluded and sheltered in the whole site, which lies between the main house and a charming guest cottage clad in black clapboard.

Here the planting is vivid with splashes of burnt orange, most notably in the *Eremurus* x *isabellinus* 'Cleopatra' and *Rosa* 'Mrs Oakley Fisher,' which look stunning against the black walls and neighbouring clumps of rich violet *Campanula* 'Sarastro'.

"But I have kept the planting deliberately simple everywhere," says Jinny. "The aim was to limit how much maintenance the garden would require. The real luxury of this site was in the soil preparation – essential given the ground is predominantly chalk. But beyond that, my job really was to bring out the glory of the site." ☐

USEFUL INFORMATION

You can see more of Jinny's work at www.jinnyblom.com

Turn the page for nine of Jinny's favourite plants for summer. ▷

Top left These mature yew topiary specimens in a variety of shapes provide points of interest on the lawn. Jinny sourced the clipped yew from Hortus Loci nursery (wholesale only).

Top right Narrow beds replete with apricot-coloured *Eremurus* x *isabellinus* 'Cleopatra', *Alchemilla mollis* and other cottage garden favourites enhance the prettiness of the guest house garden.

Bottom left The brick and flint wall creates a benign microclimate, sheltered from the biting winds that sweep the bastion, glimpsed through a weathered oak door.

Bottom right The circular pond is an ancient feature marked on early maps of the farm. Now it is planted simply with water lilies, leaving much of its surface clear to reflect the sky.

Equipment and furnishing

The oak garden doors were designed by Jinny but Oak Leaf Gates (01432 850 100, www.oakleafgates.co.uk) has a small range of standard designs priced from £1,600 plus VAT and also offers a bespoke service for specific commissions.

An extraordinary bench fashioned from vine roots turns seating into sculpture in a sheltered spot by the kitchen. Similar benches are available from West Sussex furniture designer Giovanna Ticciati (www.giovannaticciati.com) priced from £1,500.

Willow obelisks are placed in the beds of the guest house gardens to support sweet peas, but make attractive features in their own right as well. You can make your own relatively easily, but similar obelisks are sold in packs of two by Argos, £19.99 (www.argos.co.uk).

The greenhouse was made by Marston & Langinger (www.marston-and-langinger.com). All their buildings are bespoke, but prices for the manufacture and installation of a comparable model would start at around £40,000.

9 plants for summer

1 *Rosa* 'Princesse de Nassau'
Trained up the front of the house, in the most exposed part of the garden. It flowers late and is amazingly fragrant. USDA 7a-10b†.

2 *Lavandula angustifolia* 'Hidcote'
An old favourite, but no less valuable for that. Not all lavenders are created equal, and this compact variety is something special. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 4a-11.

3 *Rosa* 'Ghislaine de Féligonde'
A favourite with Jinny because the blooms change as they mature. "They start off apricot in bud, opening to knicker pink flowers that fade to off-white with age." USDA 5a-9b.

4 *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna'
Salvias are used widely around the garden, but 'Caradonna' is a favourite for its combination of deep purple flowers and near black stems. AGM. USDA 4a-9b.

5 *Rosa* Iceberg (= 'Korbin')
Planted en masse to stunning effect in this garden, Iceberg is an uncomplaining variety that produces masses of pure white flowers all summer long. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 4a-9a.

6 *Geranium* Patricia (= 'Brempat')
Like the salvias, hardy geraniums are a reliable group that Jinny often includes for their combination of low maintenance and high impact. AGM. USDA 3a-7b.

7 *Rosa* 'Mrs Oakley Fisher'
This compact hybrid tea is well behaved in a mixed border and produces a succession of rich apricot blooms. USDA 6a-10b.

8 *Campanula* 'Sarastro'
A low maintenance, high impact variety that forms generous clumps smothered in large purple flowers from early summer until September. USDA 4b-8a.

9 *Eremurus* x *isabellinus* 'Cleopatra'
This burnt-orange foxtail lily throws up statuesque flower spikes, which look stunning against the black stained walls of the guest cottage. USDA 7b-10a.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

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7 SUSAN MCKESSAR / JUSTOURPICTURES.COM

The exuberant planting at Capel House provides the perfect place to sit and enjoy the subtleties of the evening sunlight.

In brief

Name Capel House.
What Moated garden around 500-year-old house.
Where Near Ashford, Kent.
Size Five acres, of which approximately two acres is ornamental garden.
Climate The garden is now sufficiently sheltered to offer plants a protective microclimate but in very cold winters can still become a frost pocket.
Soil Very heavy clay, waterlogged for much of winter and spring, turning to cracked bricks in summer.
Points of interest Board walk through lush bog garden, spring woodland garden, new red and orange garden for late summer.

Intelligent design

Framed by a moat, the bog garden at Capel House is a treasure trove of dynamic planting

WORDS **NON MORRIS** PHOTOGRAPHS **LEIGH CLAPP**

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> *"Gillian has implemented her plans slowly and carefully as time and money have allowed"*

1 Once a muddy field of self-seeded willows, the approach to Capel House is now an elegant lawn with a softly curved moat cutting through it.

2 The house emerges from a gentle haze of *Lychnis coronaria*, *Stachys byzantina*, *Hebe* 'Purple Queen', *Verbena bonariensis*, *Cynara cardunculus* and *Artemisia* 'Powys Castle'.

3 The upright leaves of *Iris pseudacorus* and lush lime green of *Matteuccia struthiopteris* provide a ribbon of contrasting foliage throughout the bog garden.

4 Gillian deadheading oxeye daisies (*Leucanthemum vulgare*) in the woodland walk to prolong the flowering season.

5 A swathe of bright yellow *Lysimachia punctata* lights up an entire bank.

6 The classic wooden oriental bridge has a timeless charm.

7 *Stachys sylvatica* and oxeye daisies grow hip-high in the Woodland Walk.

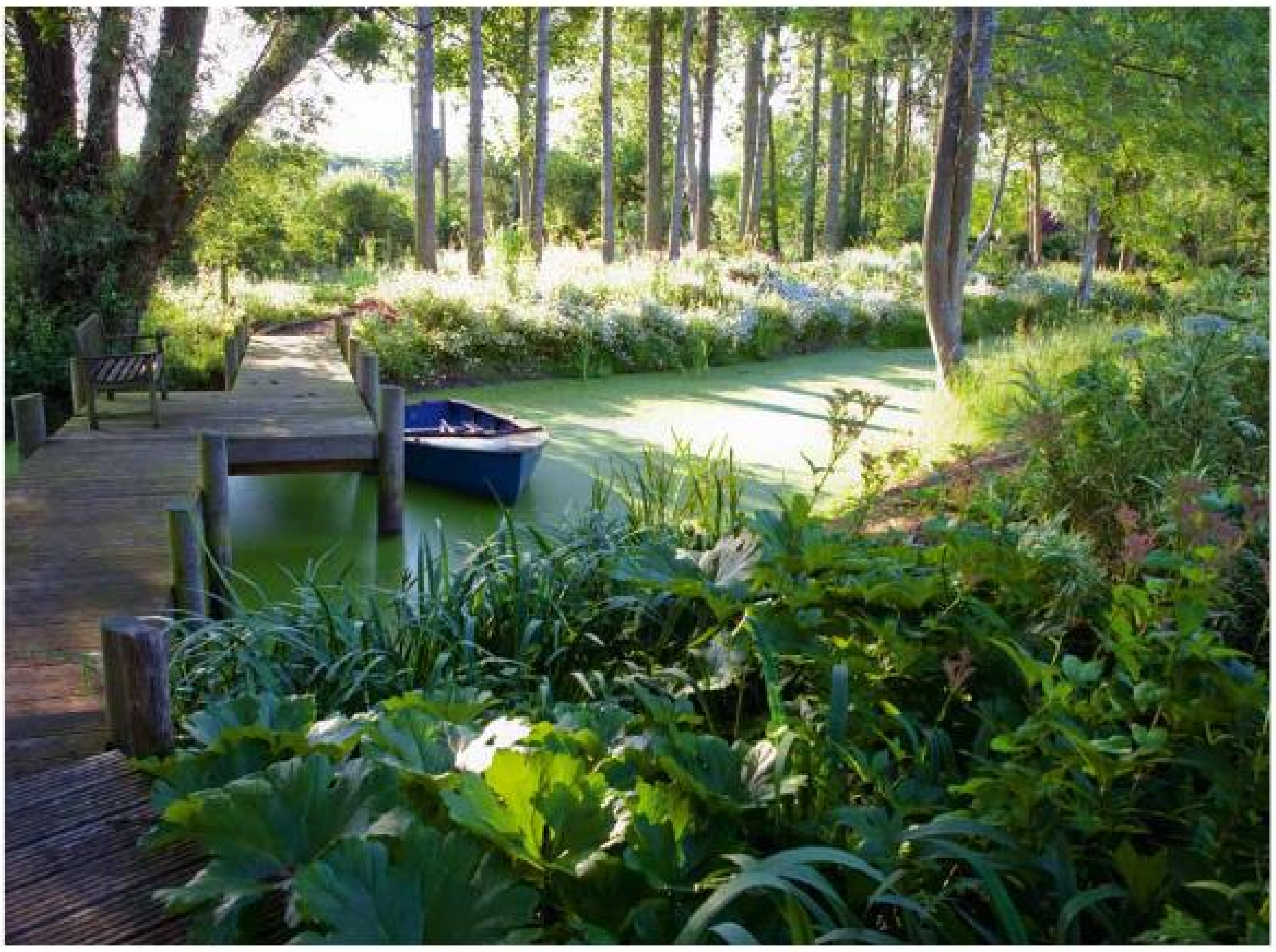
Despite a successful career as a serious landscape designer, it was not until her family moved out of London in 2001 that Gillian Temple had the chance to create a garden for herself. Capel House is a 500-year-old, moated, Kentish yeoman's house – "a sleeping beauty house, in the middle of 4-foot-high meadow". The family were the only buyers undeterred by 5 acres of heavy clay ("you can make pots with it"), several mature trees with honey fungus, hundreds of self-seeded willows, a stagnant pond and muddy ditches.

Gillian's vision for the garden was clear from the start. Great structure was crucial – she cites Rousham landscape garden in Oxfordshire and designer Christopher Bradley-Hole as influences – and she has implemented her plans slowly and carefully as time and money have allowed. Her aim was to reframe the house with water in a contemporary way.

As well as tree planting – *Liriodendron tulipifera* 'Aureomarginatum' and *Cedrus atlantica* Glauca Group – the first big project was the bog garden, created from one side of the moat. Gillian wanted a bold zig-zag board walk through lush, vibrant planting. There were surprises: conditions too wet in winter for *Gunnera*, *Rodgersia* and *Rheum* and a bank so dry and sunny that she turned to *Cistus* and *Kniphofia*. Another dry, shady bank is clothed in soft mounds of purple *Acer palmatum* var. *dissectum* (a veteran of a dozen Chelsea shows), *Alchemilla mollis* and hosta. Gillian loves the combination: "Fluffy lime green with the grey hosta and purple acer. I'm never frightened to use colour," she announces firmly. Singing drifts of orange and pink primulas glow happily next to huge lime leaves of *Lysichiton* and *Osmunda regalis* and a generous arc of bright yellow *Lysimachia punctata* lights up an entire bank. The next "blast of colour" will come from purple loosestrife and *Filipendula*.

Five years after moving in, the diggers arrived to tackle the moat. They created a soft curved shape and Gillian designed an elegant weir with stepping stones across. Beyond this a path winds gently through a woodland garden, carpeted with bulbs in spring and now a romantic walk through hip-high oxeye daisies and Jacob's ladder.

The setting sun can be viewed from a stone seat made from the doorstep of her previous house. In fact the garden is punctuated with connections to Gillian's past, like the two stone planters inherited from her grandmother; her favourite a wonderful deep stone egg spilling over with rust-coloured sempervivum. Behind the house, the centrepiece of a newly planted 'hot' garden is a peacock tail moon gate designed by Gillian's father, in the 1950s. Here, in what was the original kitchen garden, Gillian bravely removed most of a mature oval-shaped yew hedge as it grew too close to the windows. She extended the remaining curved hedge ▷



▷ with new straight sides to form what she smilingly calls her "Yew-U". The new hedging is immaculate and the garden is a space for outdoor eating.

The fourth side of the house is currently a perfect croquet pitch of a sunken lawn. But Gillian intends to install an elegant contemporary canal here. The walk continues through the newly planted fruit tree avenue to an old orchard which is now a gently chaotic Airsoft shooting arena for her teenage sons. I wonder if this is Gillian's favourite area of the garden, where nature is free to do what it wants. She is clearly pleased that the garden is impossible to police. Knowing when to stop imposing one's will is something she values – many of her favourite planting combinations are ones that simply "invited themselves". □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Gillian Temple Associates
Capel House, Capel Road, Hamstreet,
Ashford, Kent TN26 2EH.
Tel 01233 733073.
Website www.gilliantemple.co.uk
Open The garden is only open to the public very occasionally for charity events.

Gillian Temple's advice on creating a boggy garden

Bog and marginal plants ideally need a wet summer and a slightly drier winter, whereas many British streams and ponds offer the opposite, so before choosing the plants, observe how extreme the seasons can be. Gillian's bog garden can sometimes dry out in summer and need a little irrigation; in winter it becomes frozen mud.

Be prepared to be surprised and to experiment. Plants such as gunneras and rheums could not cope when the bog garden froze in winter and one bank is so hot and sunny Gillian grows *Cistus*, *Pittosporum* and *Kniphofia* instead.

Gillian creates huge amounts of compost in her garden and applies this regularly to improve the condition of the soil.

Plant marginals in mid spring rather than autumn to avoid the plants being too cold and waterlogged in their first winter – but ensure they have sufficient moisture in their first summer.

Gillian started off with tiny plants – "bits of root, which disappeared into the mud with a small sucking noise". Buy bigger plants if you can afford them as little plants will struggle more in the difficult conditions.

9 of Gillian's favourite bog plants

1 Primula bulleyana
For colour and impact. Many of the primulas in Gillian's garden have moved on from the original selections and are a rainbow of pink and orange. AGM[*]. RHS H4, USDA 4a-9b[†].

2 *Iris* 'Perry's Blue'
For their excellent structure – tall and slender, like an army of blue-headed soldiers passing through.

3 Hosta (various cultivars)
For the contrast in shape and tone the leaves provide, and for the extra flash of colour when they flower.

4 *Ligularia dentata* 'Desdemona'
Slug heaven, but Gillian has a soft spot for the plummy, architectural foliage. It gets away with its vulgar orange flowers because everything else seems to have stopped flowering by then, so it's a welcome splash of colour. RHS H4, USDA 3a-8b.

5 *Matteuccia struthiopteris*
This presents a pleasingly fine and dainty texture when planted against the *Lysichiton*. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 2a-10b.

6 *Lysichiton americanus*
This rules the roost at the base of the bog garden with its huge and beautiful leaves. For Gillian it is the first sign of the bog garden coming alive in spring. AGM. USDA 4b-7b.

7 *Astilbe chinensis* 'Vision in Pink'
It's as if somebody has spilled candy floss on to the bog garden – pink fluffy and girly, but Gillian likes the way it brings sun and light into the shady end of the bog garden. USDA 4a-9b.

8 *Lysimachia ciliata* 'Firecracker'
Fabulous foliage, which makes a lovely contrast with the *Lysichiton*, but a bit garish when in full flower. AGM. RHS H4, USDA 5a-9b.

9 *Lythrum salicaria*
Reliably in flower in July and August, and sometimes at the end of June. Gillian loves this for the blast of colour and the height. RHS H4, USDA 3a-9b.

[*] Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
[†] Hardiness ratings given where available.

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1 ELKE BORKOWSKI / GAP PHOTOS

In brief

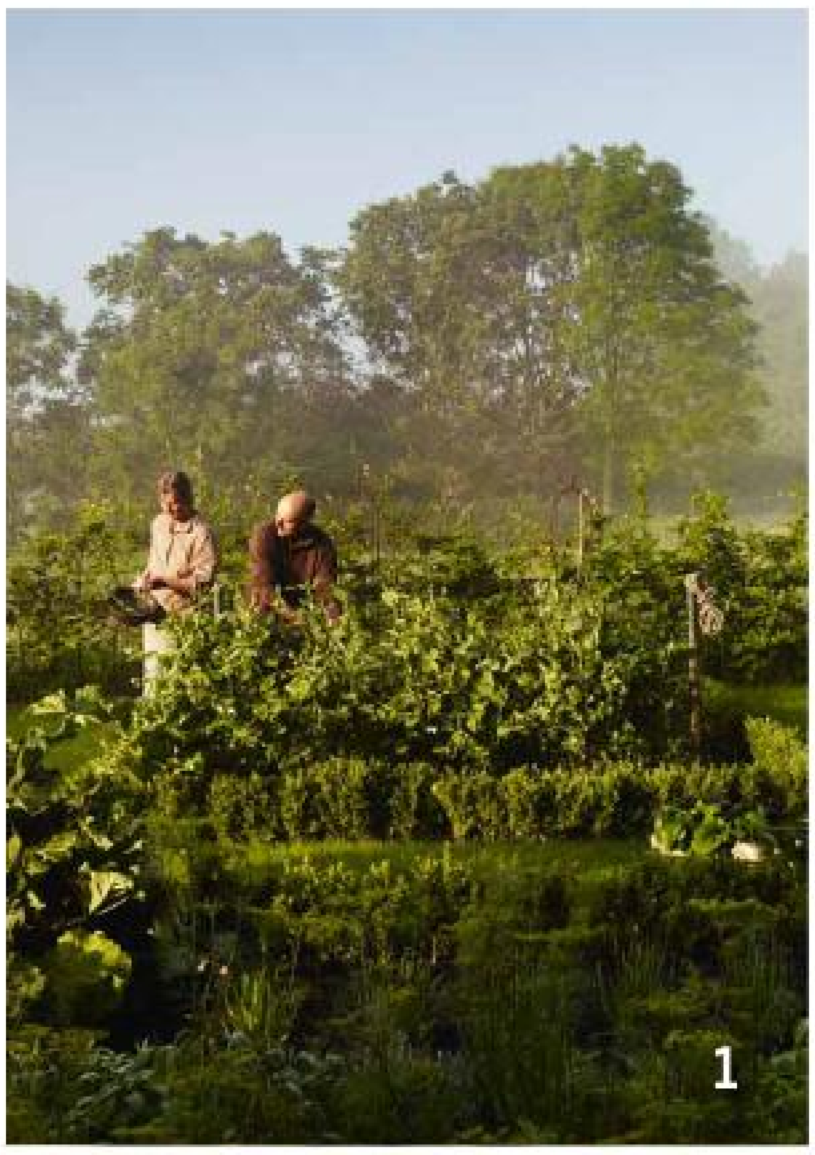
What A formal vegetable garden, which supplies Gartine, the owners' restaurant in Amsterdam.
Where Beemster, a reclaimed district in the province of North Holland.
Size 1,500 square metres.
Climate Winters can be cold, but not as harsh as in the southern parts of the Netherlands due to the proximity to the sea.
Soil Fertile heavy clay.
Points of interest Productive formal beds and trained trees.

Labour of love

North of Amsterdam, a small but highly productive vegetable garden provides much of the food for the owners' city centre restaurant

WORDS **LIA LEENDERTZ** PHOTOGRAPHS **ANDREW MONTGOMERY**

Early morning harvesting beneath the vegetable garden's lollipop-trained trees.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1 Kirsten Ekhart and Willem-Jan Hendriks harvest vegetables that they will later serve at their restaurant, Gartine.

2 Ice radish, a daikon-type radish that Kirsten uses in soups.

3 Both sweet and savoury cupcakes are a Gartine speciality.

4 Lavender from the garden is infused in honey and cream for use in the restaurant.

5 Kirsten makes white currants into jams to serve with breakfast, and uses the sprigs to decorate cakes.

6 Broad bean 'Crimson Flowered'.

7 The Amsterdam restaurant, with antique Portuguese chandelier.

8 The box-edged vegetable beds.

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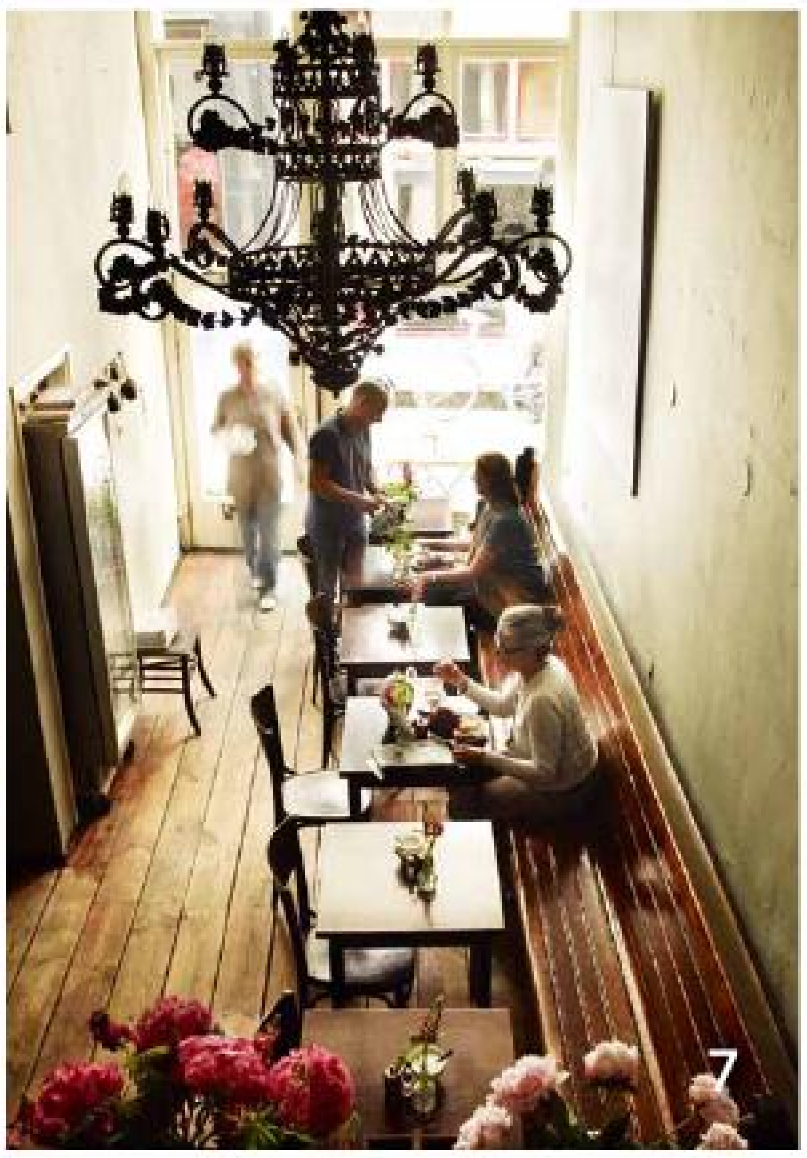
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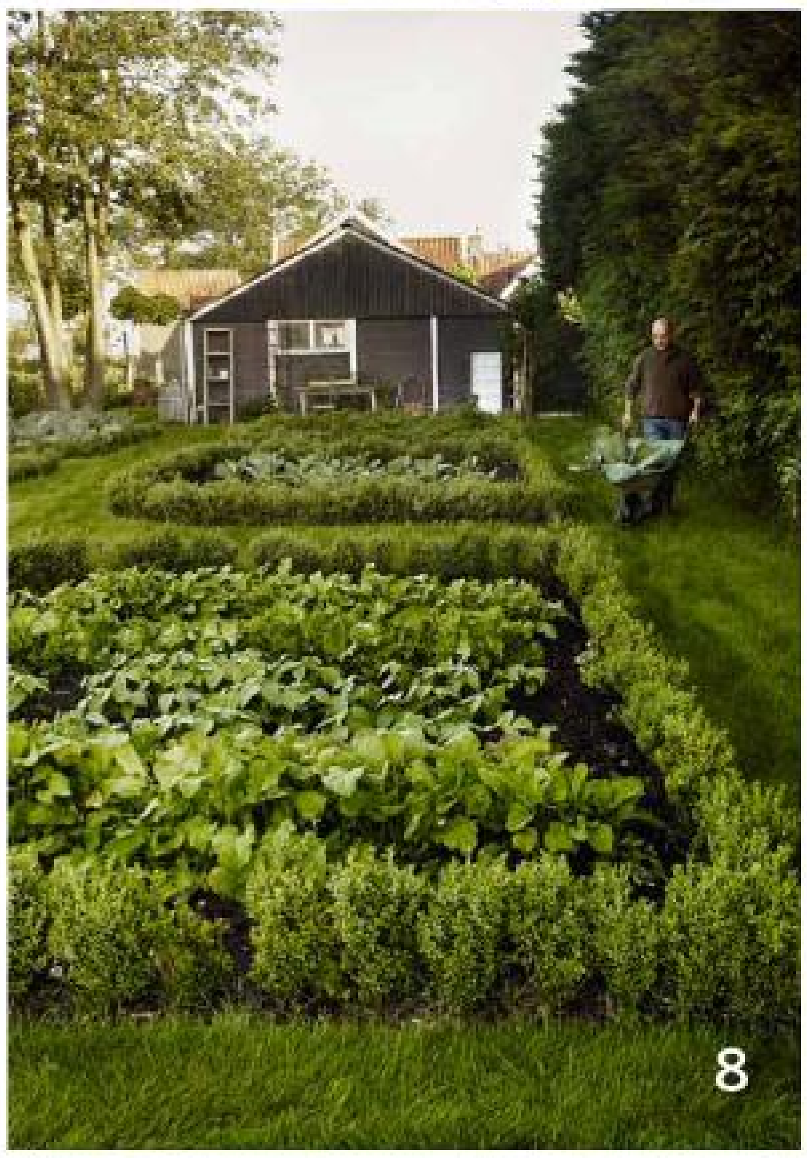
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Kirsten Eckhart and Willem-Jan Hendricks may well be the hardest working people in horticulture. Or restaurants. Or both. Their small and highly appraised restaurant, Gartine, serves only homemade food, the majority of it grown by them in their smallholding north of Amsterdam. This sounds a simple and straightforward proposition perhaps, but here's what it takes to do such a thing with integrity: from Wednesday to Sunday, 6am to 8pm, Kirsten cooks and Willem-Jan waits tables, then they drive the 30km home to plant and harvest into the evening. On Monday and Tuesday they garden and plan menus. There is no day off.

Their devotion is widely appreciated. Housed in a 16th-century building in the centre of Amsterdam, the cosy and idiosyncratic little restaurant's ten tables are almost always booked out. "I suppose people just love to see so clearly where their food has come from," says Kirsten. The restaurant offers breakfast, lunch and high tea. Breakfast is sourdough, French toast, pancakes or croissants served with Kirsten's homemade jams. Lunch is a selection of sandwiches, quiches, potato pancakes and salads, and high tea is a selection of cakes. The home-grown fruit and vegetables are matched with carefully chosen local produce: Boeren Leidse, a raw milk cheese made with cumin seeds; local Gouda cheese and clotted cream; Ardenner ham; Amsterdam ossenwurst (ox sausage) and bread from a nearby specialist sourdough bakery. "We like using things that are locally and properly produced," says Kirsten. "It is very important to help small producers, but they are also better products."

Their own offerings of course are the vegetables. The garden in which they are grown could not be more different in atmosphere to the snug restaurant where they are prepared and eaten. To reach it Kirsten and Willem-Jan drive out of central Amsterdam and to the north, into the 'polder' of Beemster, one of the earliest patches of Holland to be reclaimed with the use of windmills, around 1612. It is a land of open skies, canals, tulips, right angles and straight lines, and a UNESCO world heritage site because of the creativity used in its planning. This is a calm, stylish landscape, and the garden reflects it, box hedges enclosing the square vegetable beds, lollipop and carefully trained shade trees providing strong structure. It is a landscape that Willem-Jan in particular has had to acclimatise to. "I love trees! And there are not many trees here. Our nearest neighbours are 2km away and I can see them." But the ground is hugely fertile clay and the light is good and it is the perfect place to grow the produce they need.

As befits their philosophy, Kirsten and Willem-Jan like to grow more unusual vegetables and heritage varieties. "We want to find the special ones, and the most tasty ones. That is the whole idea of growing them ourselves," says Willem-Jan. "I want people to think, 'I have never experienced food that way.'" They dedicate lots of space to lettuce and other salad leaves, but also grow fruit bushes and trees as a source for cakes and pies and for Kirsten's jams. "We love the link between the garden and the restaurant," says Kirsten. One of their most popular items is the vegetable garden soup, a simple broth studded with whatever was picked that morning. It seems the customers love the garden too. □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Gartine, Taksteeg 7, 1012 PB Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Tel +31 (0)20 320 4132.

Website http://gartine.nl

Turn over for four delicious recipes from Gartine ▷

Kirsten and Willem-Jan's favourite cooking crops

Broad bean 'Crimson Flowered'
"We love the beautiful purple blossom," says Kirsten. "We can use the beans of course, but also the young peel in soup. Another favourite dish is broad beans with parmesan cheese and bacon."

Savoy cabbage 'Bloemendaalse Gele'*
"We like this cabbage for its crunchy texture, good in soups and salads, but it takes up a large amount of space in the garden."

Tree onion (*Allium cepa* Proliferum Group)
"This onion is perennial and keeps growing, so we can use it throughout the year. It is perfect for decorating dishes." USDA 3b-9a[†].

White cabbage 'Platte Kortpoot'
"This is a very good cabbage for quiches and sliced thinly in sandwiches. We like it for its tender texture."

Courgette 'Striato Italia'
"We use this in cakes and make pickles out of it for the winter days, mixed with onions and bell peppers in sweetened vinegar. It is good for this recipe as it stays firm."

Dill (*Anethum graveolens*)
"Our favourite herb – we both love its fresh taste with fish but also in spreads. We use it raw with cream cheese or with homemade mayonnaise." RHS H4.

Radish 'Ijskegel'
"One of the first vegetables we can harvest in spring, very spicy and perfect to decorate savoury cupcakes. On top we put a little bit of cream cheese and thinly sliced radish."

Carrot 'Amsterdamse Bak'
"Ideal for broth and carrot cakes as this cultivar is a little bit sweet. We also roast it with cumin seeds and olive oil or make a spread of carrots and onions, which we serve on garlic bread with smoked trout."

Lettuce 'Red Deer Tongue'
"We use a lot of lettuce in the restaurant and this is a loose-leaf cultivar that keeps growing when you cut the leaves."

Chocolate mint (*Mentha* x *piperita* f. *citrata*)
"This is a very fragrant herb, we use it in our jams and cakes. It adds a very fresh flavour, especially in the banana jam."

*You may have to search around a little more for Dutch cultivars.

[†] Hardiness ratings given where available.

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1 Kirsten harvests broad beans, soon to be served to a loyal fanbase.

2 The couple are keen on using a wide variety of herbs in their dishes.

3 The couple eat in the garden every evening, if the weather is good.

4 Lavender flowers ready for use in lemonade.

5 Fennel seeds and leaves are used in spreads and soups.

6 Carrot 'Amsterdamse Bak', just a couple of hours from the plate.

7 Willem-Jan harvesting his favourite savoy cabbage.

8 'Belle De Fontenay' is one of the couple's favourite potatoes.

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Oven roasted veg

- 8 tbsp olive oil
- 4 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 4 onions, chopped into chunks
- 10 potatoes, quartered
- 8 carrots, chopped lengthways
- 8 parsnips, chopped lengthways
- 4 sprigs of rosemary, destalked
- 8 sprigs of thyme, destalked
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Pour olive oil into a large baking tray, and add all the vegetables, herbs, salt and pepper. Cover with aluminium foil, and place in the oven for 40 minutes. Remove foil near the end of the cooking time to allow the vegetables to brown.

Pear tart

- 1 tbsp sunflower oil
- 125g butter
- 1 tbsp of cocoa powder
- 200g of digestive biscuits
- 6 leaves of gelatine
- 500ml of double cream
- 6 tbsp of runny honey
- 2 vanilla sticks
- 7 poached pears
- 250g white currants to decorate

Crumble the biscuits and combine with the butter and cocoa powder in a food processor. Grease a 24cm loose-bottom cake tin with the oil. Push the crumbly mixture into the bottom of the tin and place into the fridge.

Soften the gelatine leaves in water for around 10 minutes. Take them out, squeeze them and add a few tablespoons of warm liquid to dissolve. Warm a small portion of the cream and use that to dilute the gelatine. Scrape the seeds from the vanilla pod, add with the honey to the gelatine in cream.

Whisk the remaining cream until it's just firm and while whisking add the honey, cream and gelatine mixture. Pour the creamy mixture into the tin, and place the poached pears on top. Leave to set for at least 4 hours. Decorate with white currants.

Pepper & tomato salad with tarragon dressing

Salad

- 2 heads of different lettuces
- 20 sprigs of pea flowers
- 20 red and yellow cherry tomatoes
- 2 yellow peppers
- 2 tbsp of sunflower seeds

Dressing

- 150ml of white wine vinegar
- 1 onion
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 90ml of honey
- ½ tbsp of mustard
- 1 tsp salt
- 270ml of sunflower oil
- 75g tarragon

Whizz all the dressing ingredients together in a food processor.

Wash the lettuces and dry thoroughly. Mix as much of the dressing as is needed for the size of the lettuces (you will have some left). Mix in the tomatoes, sunflower seeds and yellow peppers. Finally decorate with the pea flowers.

Broad bean soup

- 5 onions, chopped finely
- 4 cloves of garlic, chopped finely
- 125g butter
- Handful of savoy cabbage
- 20g tarragon
- 20g parsley
- 20g dill
- 2 litres of chicken stock
- 300g broad beans
- 8 carrots, chopped lengthways into four pieces

Melt the butter on medium heat. Fry the onions and garlic until golden brown. Add the stock and bring to a boil. Add the herbs and remaining vegetables. Cook for 8 minutes. Garnish with noodles.

Lupins

Thanks to the dedication of a few enthusiasts, the lupin is once more gaining in popularity and earning its rightful place in our gardens

WORDS **JOHN HOYLAND** PHOTOGRAPHS **JASON INGRAM**

In brief

What Genus of mainly herbaceous perennial plants with some shrubs and annuals. Over 275 species, of which very few are used in horticulture.

Origins Most are from North America with a few from the Mediterranean area. In some regions, notably Australia, introduced plants have become invasive species.

Size From 30cm to 2m.

Conditions In general, lupins prefer well-drained soil in full sun.

Uses A member of the legume family, *Fabaceae*, lupins are used in agriculture to fix nitrogen into the soil and as an animal feed.

***LUPINUS* 'MASTERPIECE' PBR**[‡]
The intense purple spires of this recently introduced hybrid have made it an instant hit. Each petal has a glowing orange fleck at the base. Grows to about 1m tall and flowers in June and July. USDA 4a-9a[†].

John Hoyland is a nurseryman and owner of Pioneer Plants in Letchworth. He is a regular feature writer for GARDENS ILLUSTRATED.

Should ever you think that it is too late in life to start a new gardening project, look to George Russell and his lupins. Russell, a jobbing gardener, was in his 50s when he decided to breed lupins that had the vigour and colour that was missing from the ones he knew. In his mind's eye he saw brightly coloured lupins dancing in his Yorkshire garden. Over the next 20 years, working alone on his allotments, he crossed seedlings, ruthlessly weeding out the inferior ones and recrossing the best, until he had produced a range with flowers of dazzling colours. From palest pink to darkest crimson, white, yellow, orange and red, some a single colour, others bicoloured, Russell's lupins embraced the whole spectrum. In 1937, at the age of 79, Russell exhibited his plants at the RHS Chelsea Flower Show, where the spires of colour he had dreamed of caused a sensation. In post-war Britain, Russell's lupins brought a world of colour and gaiety to gardeners who had seen little of either for too long.

Before Russell began his breeding programme, the lupin best known to gardeners was *Lupinus polyphyllus*, a North American species brought to Britain in the 1820s by plant explorer David Douglas (his eponymous fir tree was collected at the same time). The plant grows to about 1.2m tall and has flowers that range from blue to pale violet, often with a dark stem.

Although the genus consists of about 275 annual, perennial and shrubby species from North and South America, Europe and Africa, *L. polyphyllus* is one of the very few that has made the leap from the wild into gardens. The tree lupin, *L. arboreus*, a Californian native, is a gangly shrub that is covered with spikes of clear yellow flowers ▷

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[*] Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
[†] Hardiness ratings given where available.
[‡] Plant breeder's rights claimed.

▷ during late June and July. Quick-growing but short-lived, it thrives on poor, well-drained soil. Horticulturist Graham Stuart Thomas wrote that the flower's perfume is 'deliciously fragrant'. I find it a sickly sweet smell. There is a form with white flowers and another with flowers that are a washed-out blue colour.

While these species have not caught on with gardeners, lupin hybrids have been popular since Gertrude Jekyll advocated their use as strong vertical accents among irises and lilies. Jekyll was fond of white-flowered lupins, one of the best of which is *L.* 'Polar Princess' (see page 56), a compact plant with pure clean white flowers, which, at 60cm tall, is shorter than most. I grow it in front of a taller hybrid, *L.* 'Masterpiece' (page 52), one of the best-named cultivars to have been introduced recently. The flower stems are packed with dark-blue buds that open to purple flowers. As the flower matures an orange speck develops at the base of each petal.

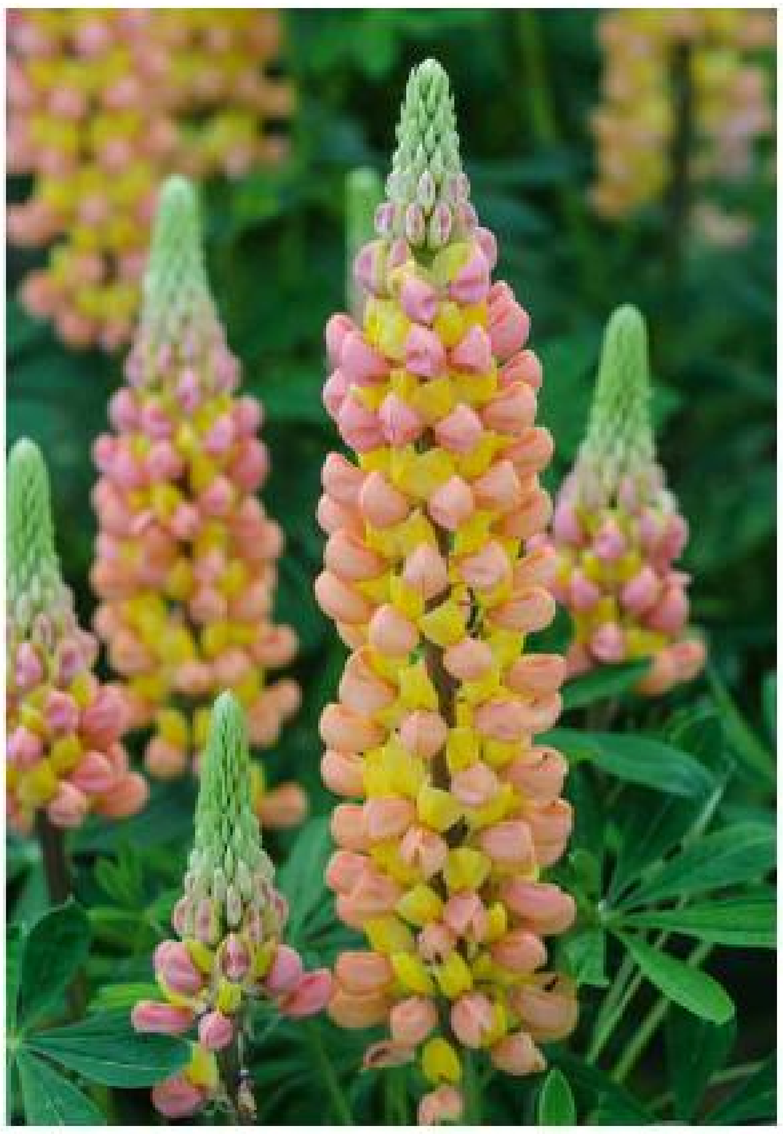
Propagating named cultivars of lupins by cuttings is a slow process. Most plants that are available at nurseries and garden centres are seed-grown and several seed strains have been developed by plant breeders. The Gallery series is a group of low-growing lupins, usually about 50cm tall, that have mainly yellow, orange or red flowers. They will flower during the first year after the seed is sown. The seed is often sold as a mixture but you can occasionally find single-colour seed. *L.* 'Gallery Red' is worth growing for the intense colour of the flowers.

The oddly named Band of Nobles Series seed strain is much taller, with plants growing as high as 1.2m. Again, they are usually sold as mixed seed but several of the series have been named. *L.* 'The Governor' is particularly striking, with flowers that have two white upper petals and three indigo-blue lower ones. The Tutti Frutti seed range contains a high proportion of plants that have bi-coloured flowers.

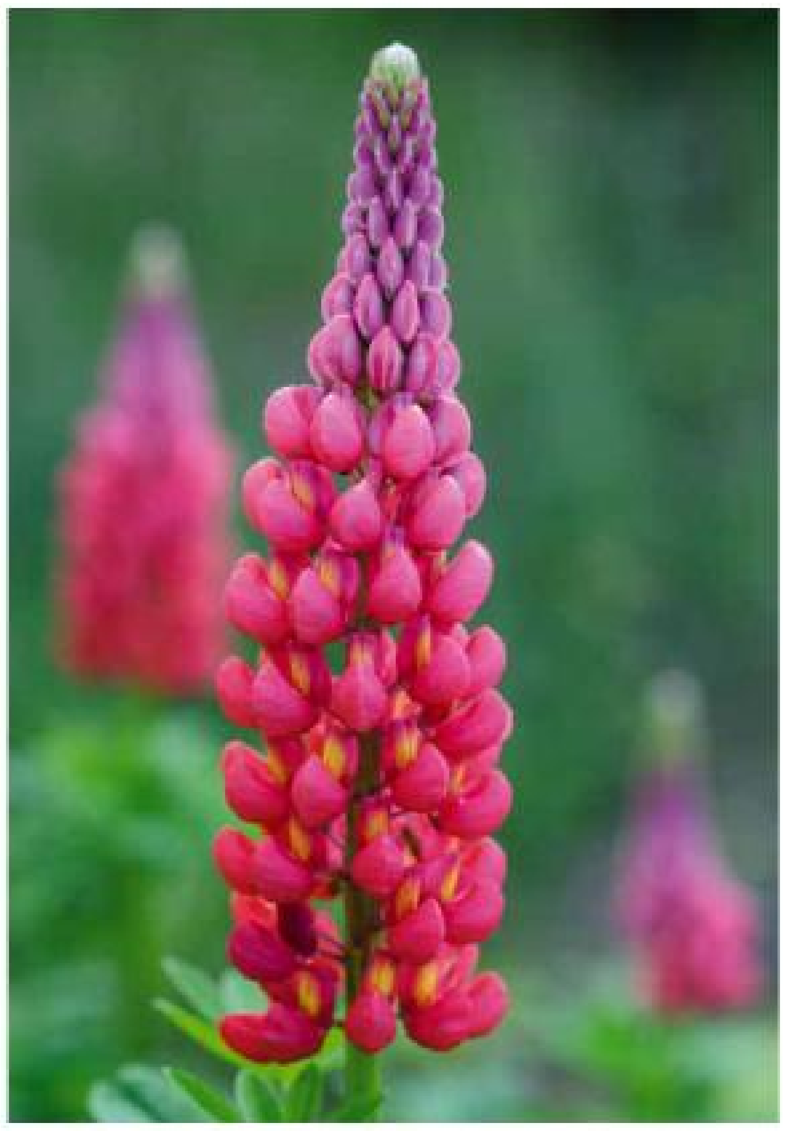
The lupins produced by modern plant breeders can be traced back 100 years to George Russell's imagination. During that time their popularity has ebbed and flowed, but there will always be a place for them in my garden. ☐

• John's pick of lupins continues over the next six pages.

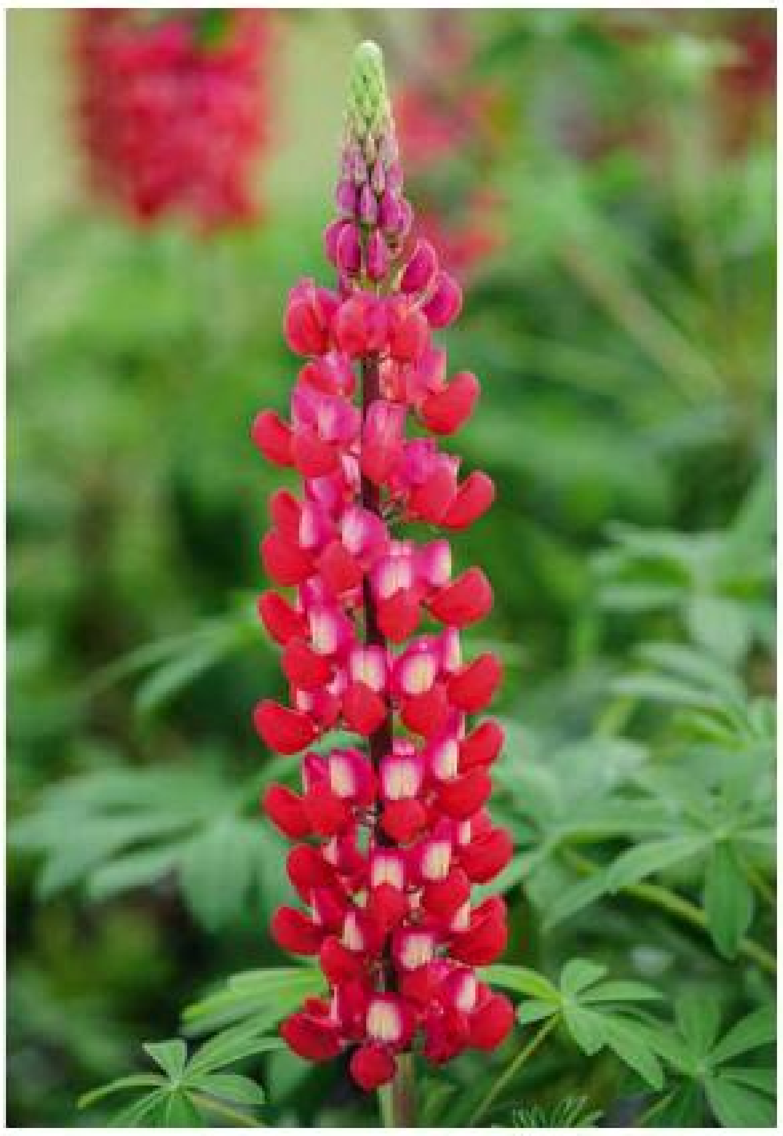
Lupin hybrids have been popular since Gertrude Jekyll advocated their use as strong vertical accents among irises and lilies



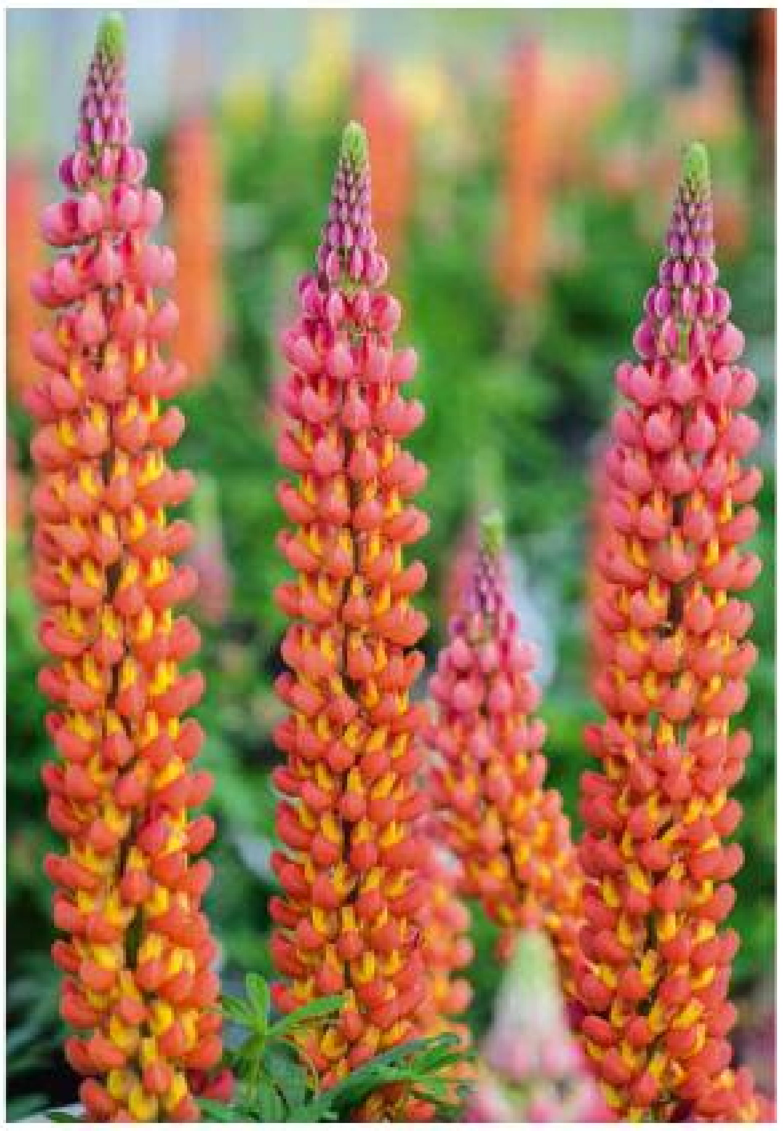
***LUPINUS* 'AFRICAN SUNSET'**
The flowers are yellow and pink, the latter fading to peach as the plant matures. Usually about 60cm tall.



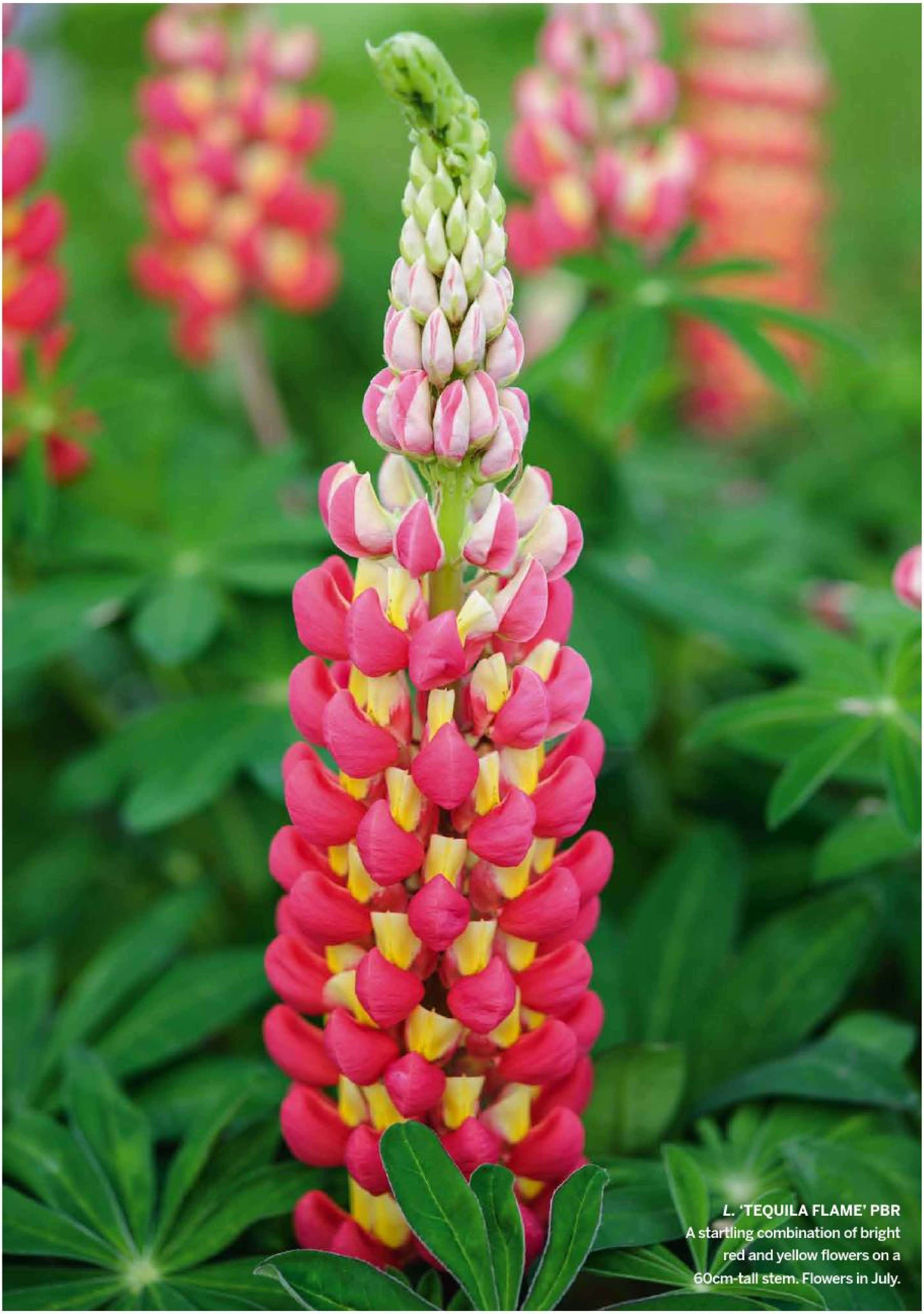
***L.* 'RED ARROW'**
Brilliant red flowers on dark stems in early May. Grows to 90cm tall.



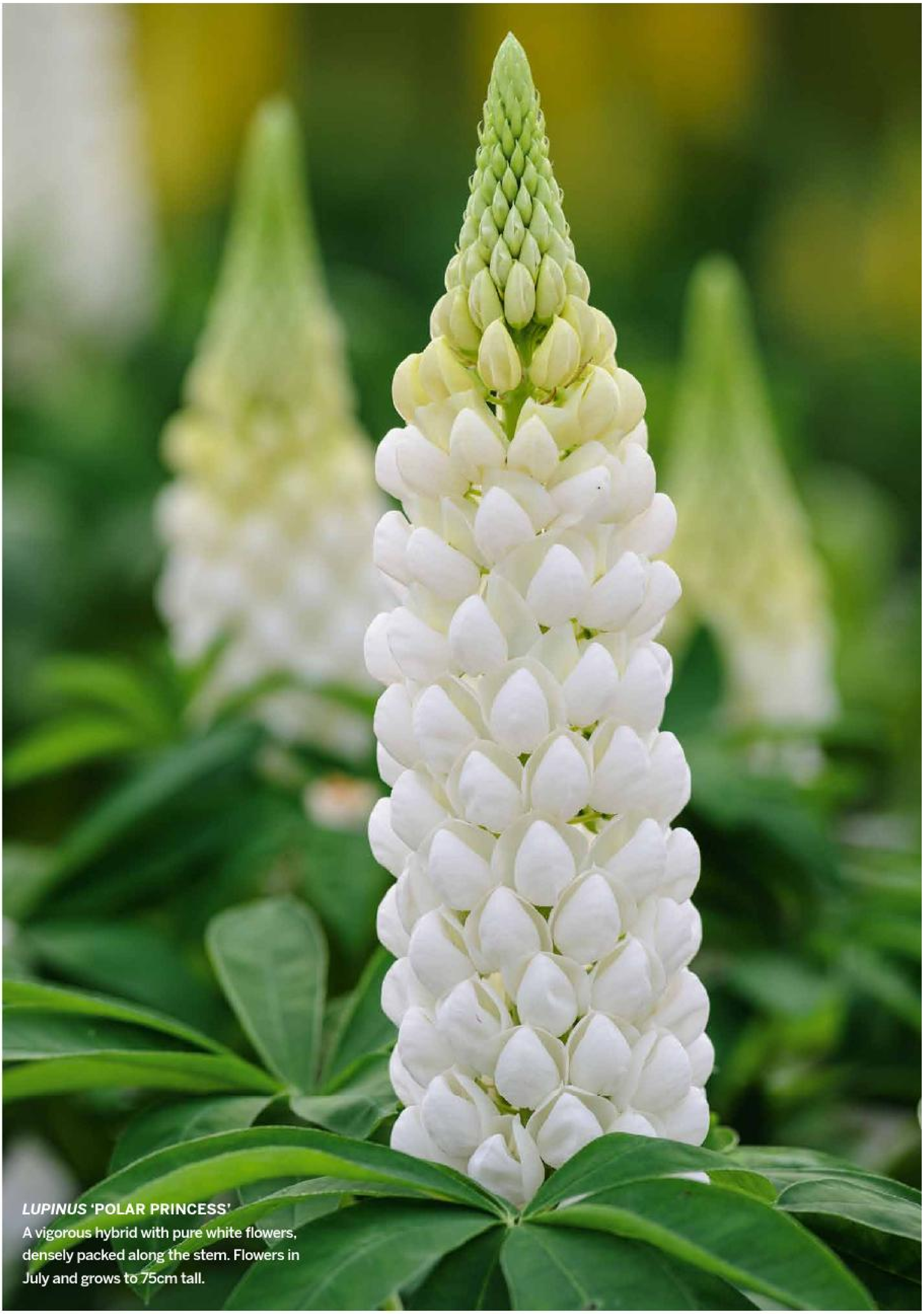
***L.* 'RED RUM' PBR**
Tightly packed rose red flowers in June and July. Grows to 90cm tall.



***L.* 'TOWERING INFERNO'**
Deep orange flowers that are speckled with yellow at the base of the petals. Flowers in June and grows to 90cm tall.

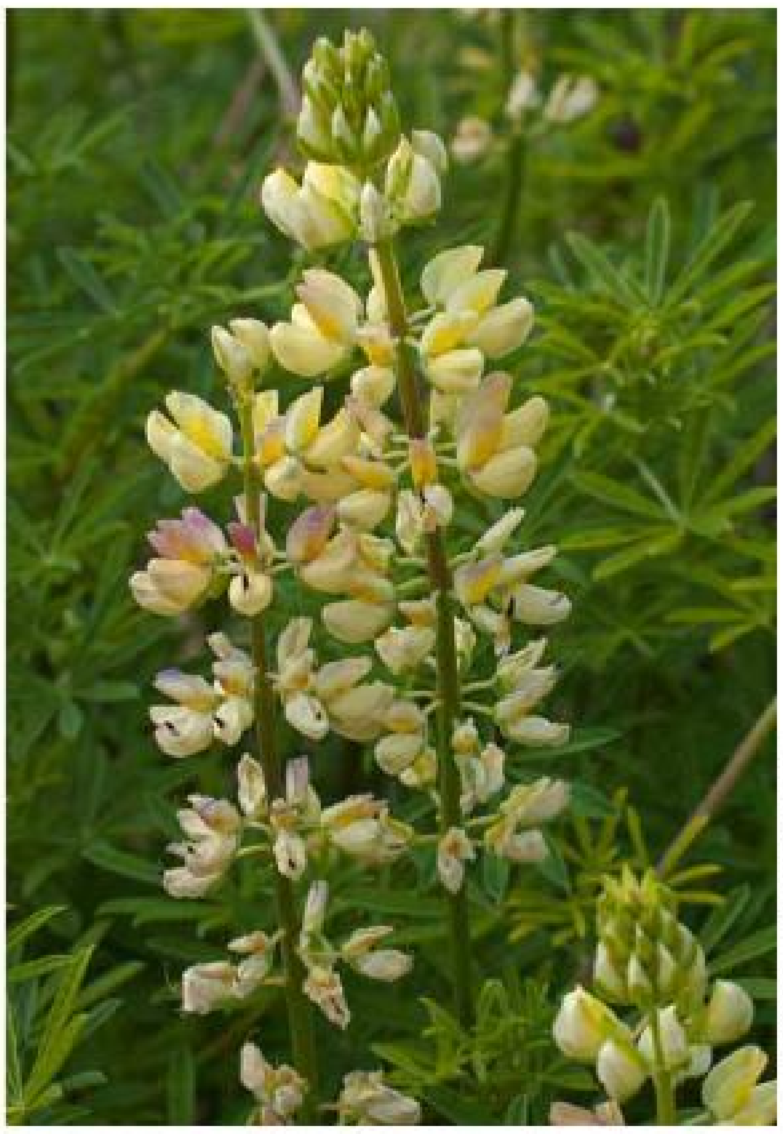


L. 'TEQUILA FLAME' PBR
A startling combination of bright red and yellow flowers on a 60cm-tall stem. Flowers in July.

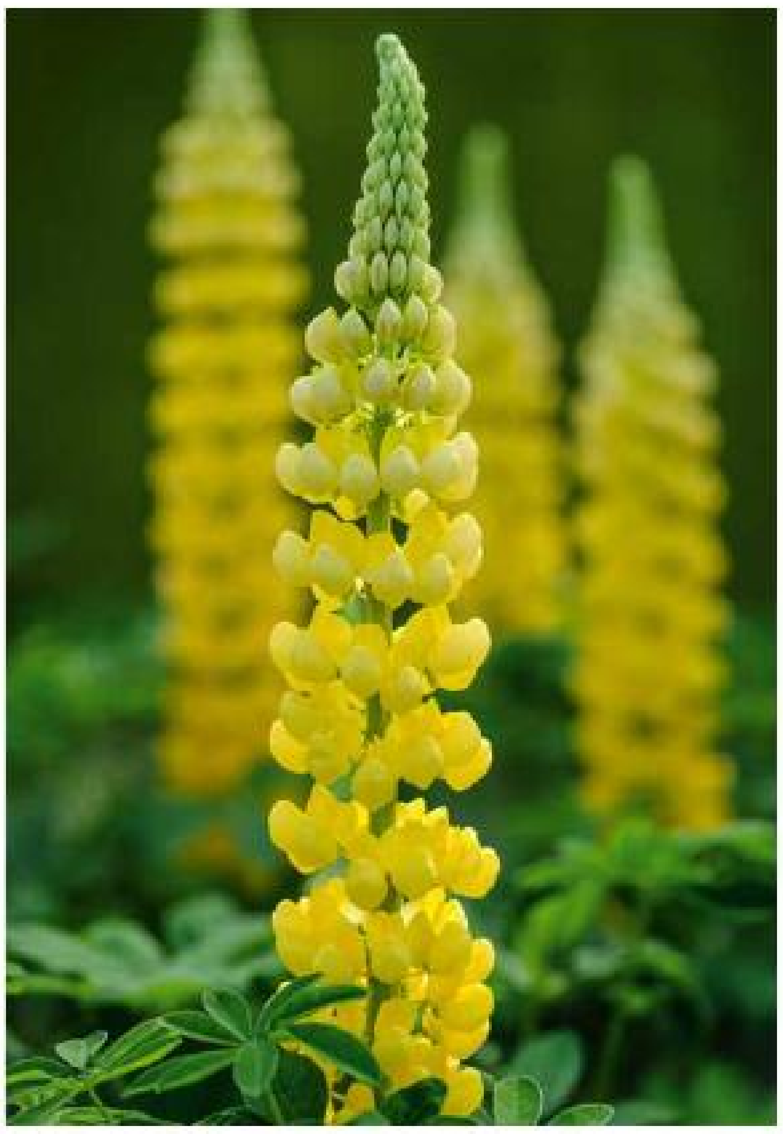


***LUPINUS* 'POLAR PRINCESS'**
A vigorous hybrid with pure white flowers, densely packed along the stem. Flowers in July and grows to 75cm tall.

> *Cut down the flower stems as soon as the flowers are done. Not only are they ugly but the masses of seed the plant produces eventually weakens it and so shortens its life*

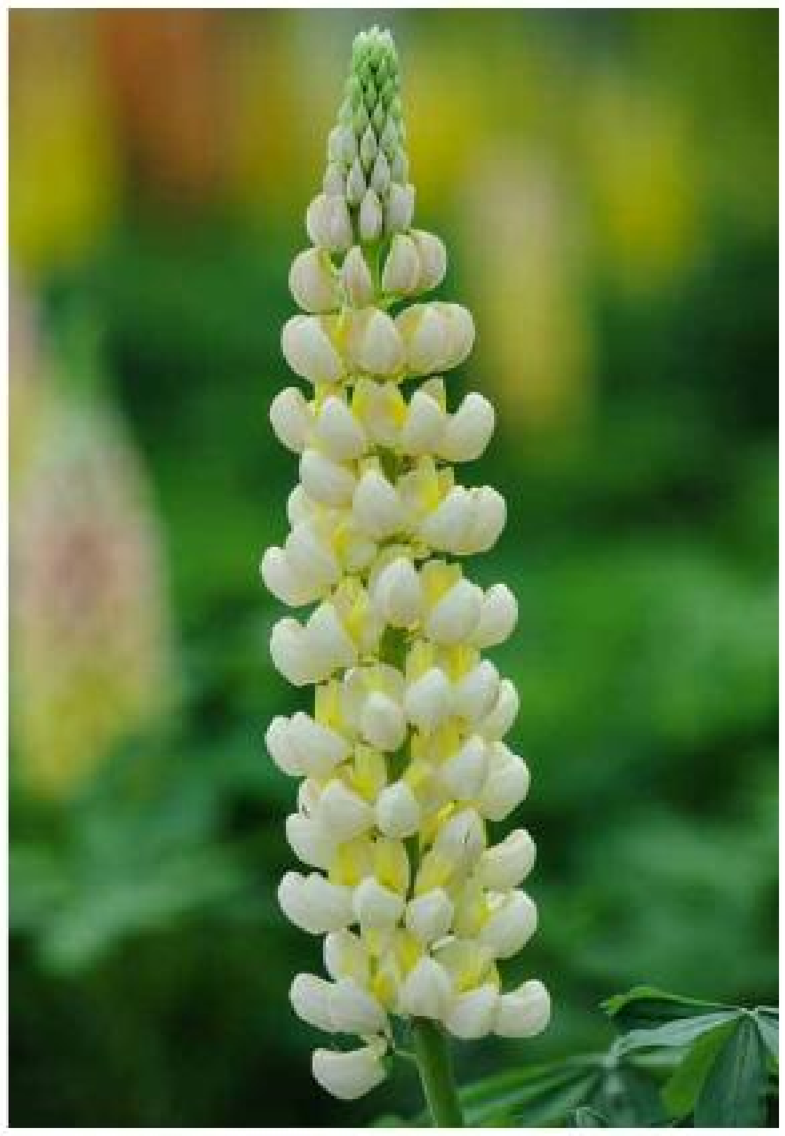


L. ARBOREUS
Sparsely flowered panicles about 30cm apart. Will quickly get to 2m tall. Produces seedlings. AGM*. RHS H4, USDA 7a-10b.

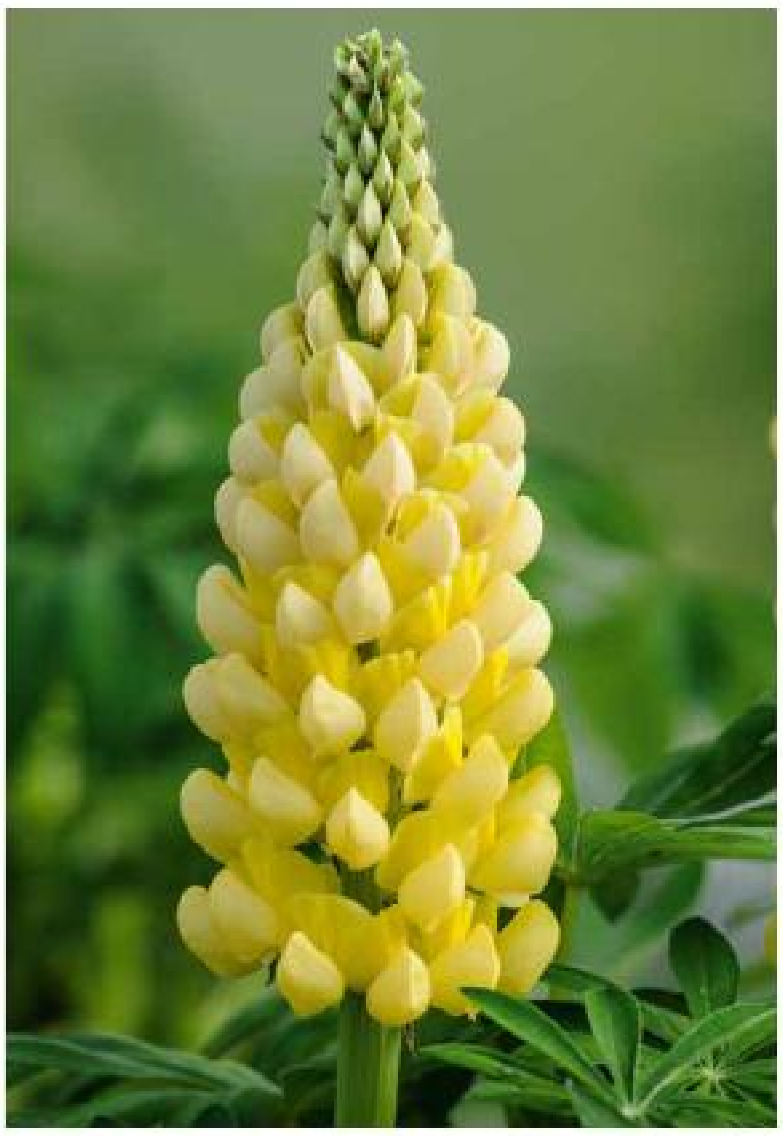


FREDERIC DIDILLON / GAP PHOTOS

L. 'DESERT SUN' PBR
A floriferous hybrid with buttery-cream buds that open to yellow flowers. First flowers in early June. Grows to 1m tall.



L. 'CASHMERE CREAM'
Narrow spikes of green-tinged buds that open to creamy white flowers in mid June. Grows to 1m tall.



L. 'SAFFRON' PBR
Pale creamy-lemon flowers on short, slender spikes in late June. Grows to 60cm tall. USDA 4a-8b.

Cultivation

- Lupins are best in an open, sunny situation in well-drained soil. In rich soil they produce lots of foliage and few flowers, so don't manure the soil before you plant them. Conventional wisdom has it they won't grow on chalky soils but, while they are more vigorous in acidic loam, they do grow perfectly well on my chalky soil. Cut down the flower stems as soon as the flowers are done. Not only are they ugly but the masses of seed the plant produces eventually weakens it and so shortens its life.

- North American lupin aphids arrived in Britain 30 years ago and are now widespread. These are about 4mm long, much larger than most aphids, and left unchecked will rapidly form large colonies that cause the plant to wilt. According to the Royal Horticultural Society, native hoverflies and ladybirds are not drawn to lupin aphids. As soon as you see them (they'll probably be hiding on the undersides of the leaves) wipe them off or spray with soapy water. If you use chemicals, there are lots around that will deal with the pest.

- The aphids help the spread of viruses, and in particular, the cucumber mosaic virus. Despite its name the virus attacks a wide range of plants, including lupins. The first sign is yellow mottling on the leaves, followed by distorted foliage and stunted growth. Dig the plant up and burn it to kill the virus.

Breeders

- Since George Russell did his work breeding lupins in vibrant colours, successive generations of breeders and nurserymen have followed his lead. Russell's original lupins were championed and popularised by nurseryman James Baker, whose fields of lupins near Wolverhampton attracted hundreds of gardeners when the plants were in flower. Disease, poor breeding regimes ▷

and, finally, building development in the 1960s saw the loss of many cultivars collected by Baker. Former National Collection holder, Pat Edwards, did much to recover and preserve some of Russell's named cultivars.

- Interest in the genus was revived by nurserymen Brian and Maurice Woodfield. Working in the same way as Russell, they spent several years producing a range of magnificent lupins. Anyone who saw their first exhibit of lupins at the 1984 Chelsea Flower Show could not fail to be impressed by the colour and sturdiness of their plants.

- The latest baton-holder in the lupin relay is Sarah Conibear. Some of her first seed came from an amateur gardener who had lived near George Russell's lupin fields and who had continued to propagate Russell's plants. Sarah is now raising cultivars – at her Devon nursery Westcountry Lupins – that are delighting a new generation of gardeners.

Where to see

NATIONAL COLLECTION

- **Westcountry Lupins**
  Tel 01237 431111,
  Donkey Meadow, Woolsery,
  Bideford EX39 5QH.
  www.westcountrylupins.co.uk

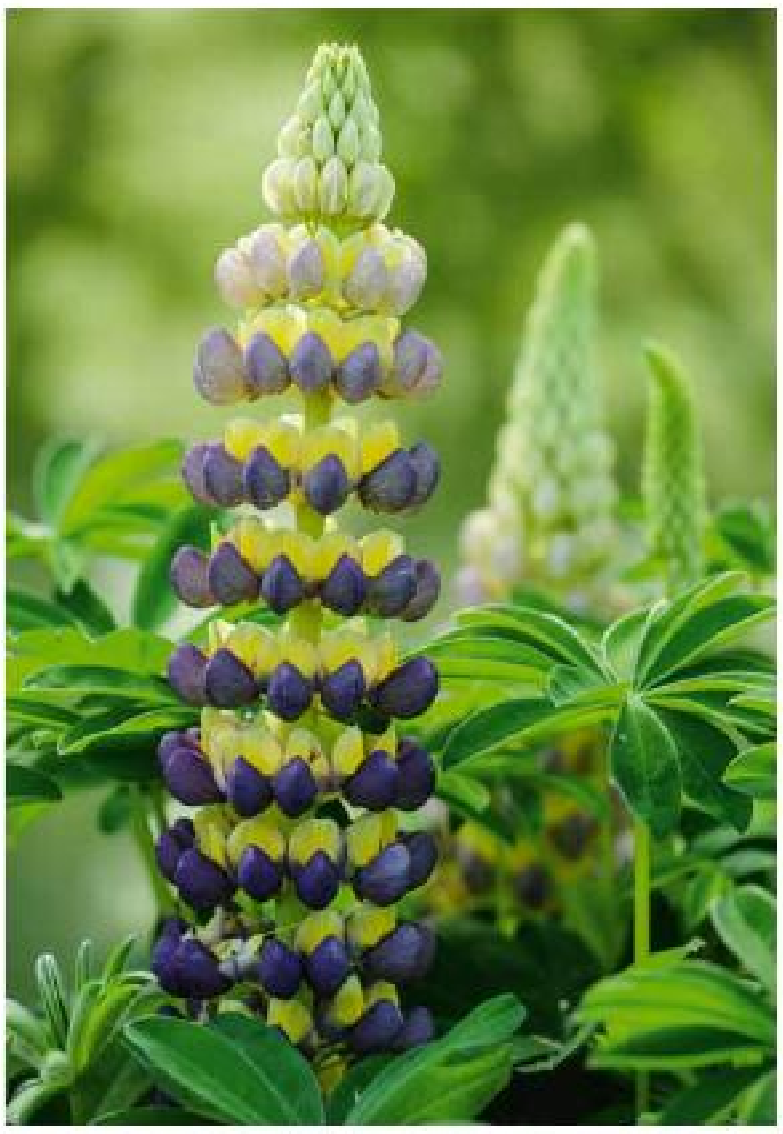
Customers can visit from March to mid-July but should ring first. Orders are sent out all year round or may be picked up with prior arrangement.

Where to buy

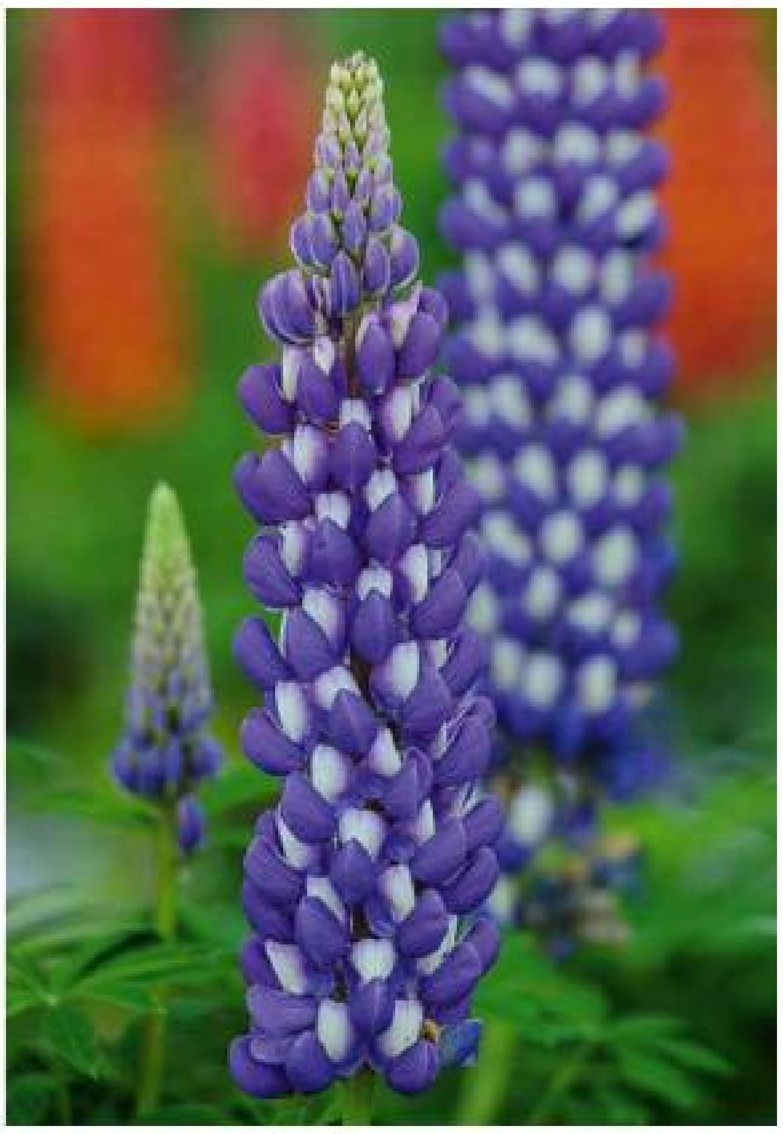
- **Westcountry Lupins.**
  See above.
- **Woottens of Wenhaston,**
  Blackheath, Wenhaston,
  Halesworth IP19 9HD.
  Tel 01502 478258,
  www.woottensplants.com

Many thanks to Westcountry Lupins, where the photographs for this feature were taken.

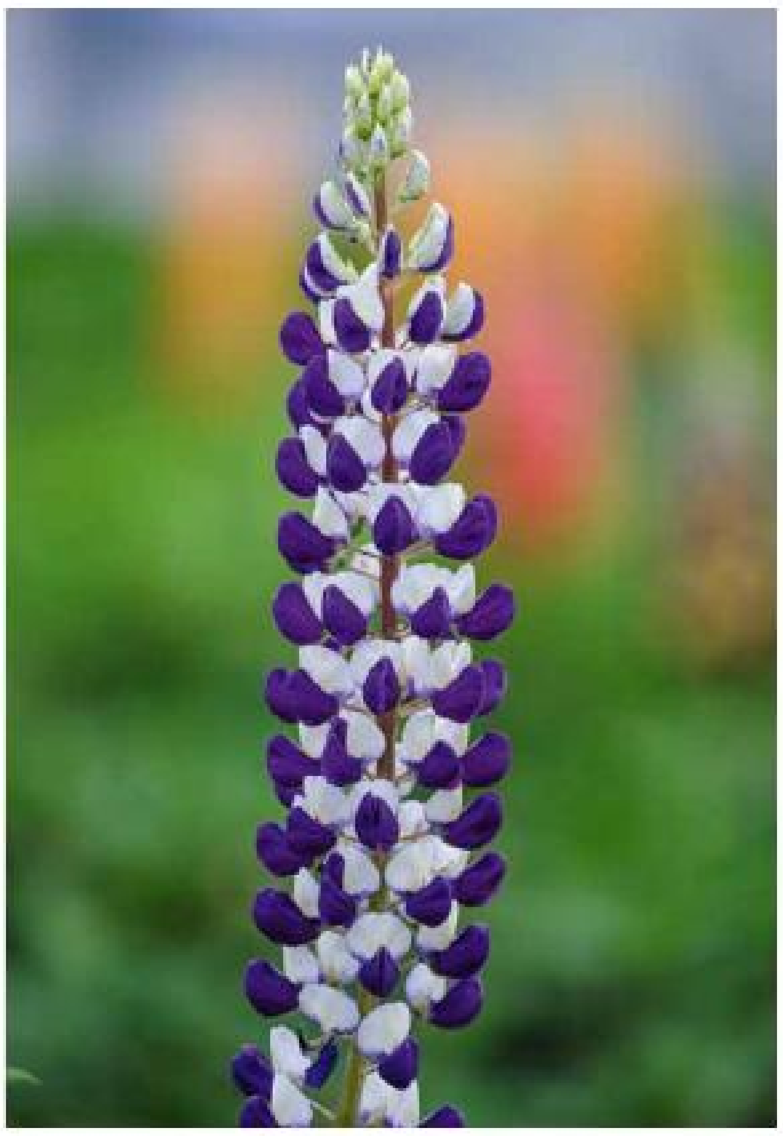
> *Interest in the genus was revived by Brian and Maurice Woodfield. Anyone who saw their first exhibit of lupins at the 1984 Chelsea Flower Show could not fail to be impressed*



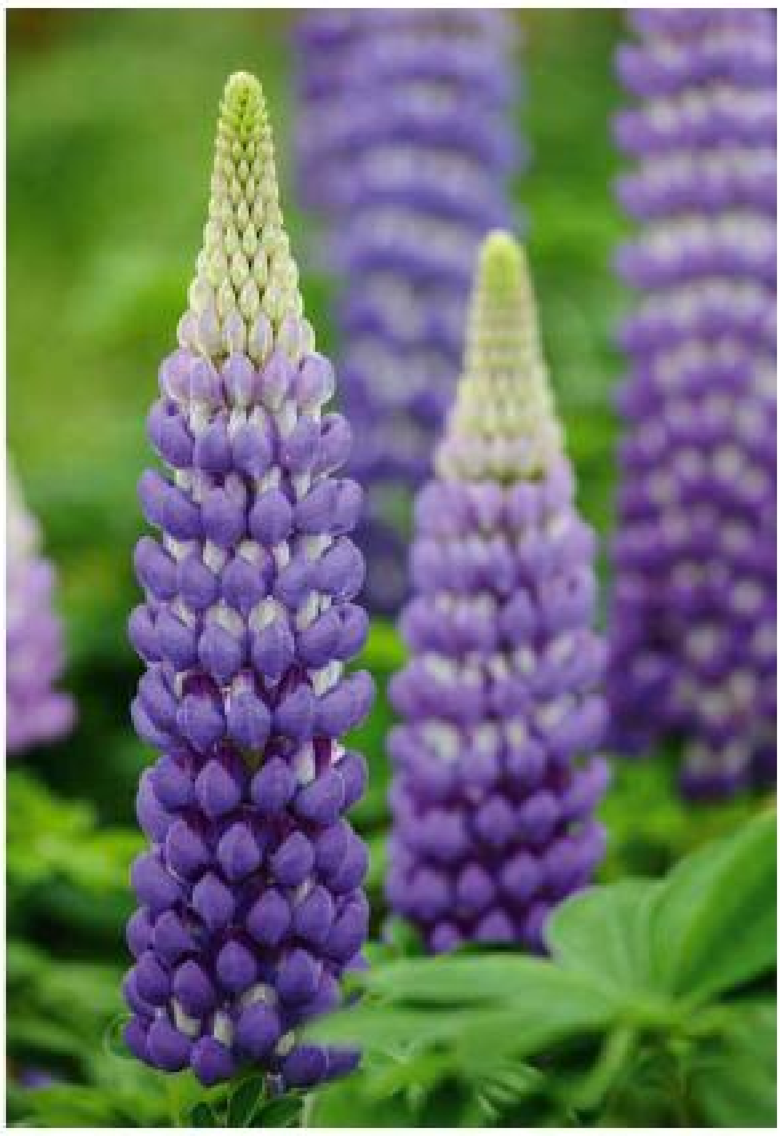
***LUPINUS* 'BRUISER'**
Pale yellow buds open to yellow and purple bicoloured flowers that darken with age. Flowers late June and grows to 60cm tall.



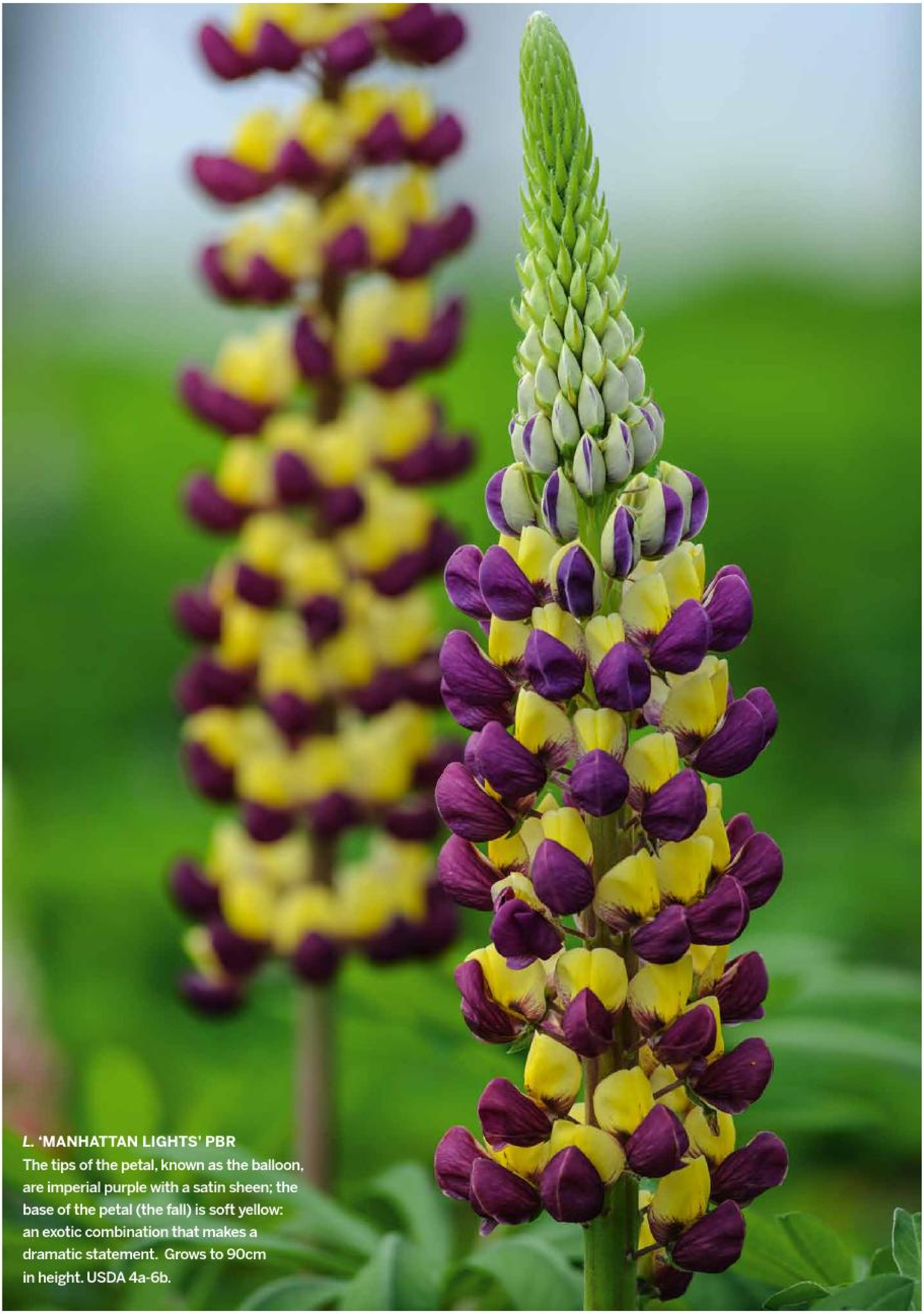
***L.* 'NEPTUNE'**
Large blue bells mottled with white to create a polka-dot effect. Flowers from late June and grows to 75cm tall.



***L.* 'JUPITER'**
A new introduction from Westcountry Lupins with startling bicoloured flowers. Grows to 1m tall and flowers in July.



***L.* 'PERSIAN SLIPPER' PBR**
A compact hybrid with short fat flower spikes in Wedgwood blue. Flowers in June and grows to 60cm tall. USDA 4a-6b.



L. 'MANHATTAN LIGHTS' PBR
The tips of the petal, known as the balloon, are imperial purple with a satin sheen; the base of the petal (the fall) is soft yellow: an exotic combination that makes a dramatic statement. Grows to 90cm in height. USDA 4a-6b.

John Carter

Now a leading nurseryman in waterside and marginal plants, John's career has taken in the RAF and oil giant Shell

WORDS **NOËL KINGSBURY** PORTRAIT **CHARLIE HOPKINSON**

John Carter and I first met when we both had nurseries and kept attending the same plant sales in the South West. My first memories were of someone who sold a wide range of mostly damp-loving plants and did a lot to promote the work of the National Council for the Conservation of Plants and Gardens (NCCPG, now Plant Heritage). More importantly, I noticed that he had a truly wicked sense of humour. What further drew me to him was his knowledge of the Middle East; not somewhere I had travelled, but I'd had friends from the region at school and was fascinated by the politics. John is the best raconteur I have ever met, and I soon realised that getting to know the man involved listening to the most extraordinary stories about the Middle East's rulers, its people, the oil industry, and a family of jobbing builders he got to know called the bin Ladens.

Born in Battersea, John went to Caius College, Cambridge, to study as a doctor. But he soon switched to zoology – as a boy, he was a passionate butterfly collector – and emerged with a degree in Natural Sciences. After joining the RAF to do his National Service, he became involved in Arab affairs while posted in Aden (now part of Yemen) and witnessed the independence struggle against the British and then the Yemeni civil war. Moving on to Oman, he found employment with the oil giant Shell. This work he summarised as "meeting up with groups of Bedouin, and explaining to them that Christians would soon be arriving to dig holes in the desert, but that it was nothing to worry about". While in Oman he and his family decided to move to the West Country, settling in 1973 in the village of Brentor on the northern side of Dartmoor, where "the landscape reminded me of Arabia".

Casting around for ideas, John noticed how "expensive water weed for aquaria and ponds was, and how easy it was to grow, so we dug lots of ponds", and in 1981, Rowden Gardens was born. With a series of lined ponds in the garden, he also began to grow waterside and marginal plants, but then noticed a problem, shared up and down the land by many gardeners with lined ponds. "There was a clear need for rushy, reedy, ferny things which looked like they belong to the pond, but because of the liner, might be in quite dry soil," he explains. So the nursery further diversified into plants such as *Miscanthus* grasses and *Bergenia*, which looked like wetland plants but did not need constant moisture. *Miscanthus* in particular was useful as "all aquatic grasses behave like Attila the Hun". In addition John built up one of the best ranges of true moisture-lovers around. Like anybody else who deals in unusual plants, there was a lot of patient explaining to do to the general public; whenever I met up with John there were usually some good stories about the latest miscomprehension – one of the best was the man who wanted to plant window boxes (seven storeys up) with the giant rhubarb look-alike *Gunnera manicata*.

The 1980s was the era of considerable growth in the number of plant collections in small specialist nurseries, and like many others, Rowden Gardens began to build up collections of particular plants, which would then be registered as national reference collections under the auspices of the NCCPG. At one stage, John and his wife Galen had *Polygonum* (now nearly all *Persicaria*), water iris (*Iris fulva*, *pseudacorus*, *versicolor*, *virginica* and *laevigata*), *Caltha* (kingcup) and *Ranunculus ficaria* (lesser celendine). The latter particularly appealed to John's sense of humour – the cultivation of a plant which many gardeners regard as a weed. I think the cultivar names appealed to him too: 'Brazen Hussy', 'Fried Egg', 'Mud'.

National flower shows followed. For three years, 1992-1994, John and Galen had a stand in the marquee at Chelsea. At the time, many of us felt a great deal of frustration with judging. There was one occasion when Professor Stearn, one of the most eminent botanists of the late 20th century, had declared an exhibit of John's beloved *Ranunculus ficaria* to be "one of the finest exhibits he had ever seen," but it was judged only worthy of a bronze by the committee. "One was disappointed that people one held in esteem were not perhaps as worthy of that as one thought they might have been," was what John says many years later. It was not what he said at the time.

For many years the Carters have been among the most colourful of a particular kind of specialist nurserymen – couples whose dogged persistence in their second career keeps in cultivation and circulation groups of plants that would never survive in the world of garden centres and mass production. As they slowly prepare to retire, others need to fill their places.

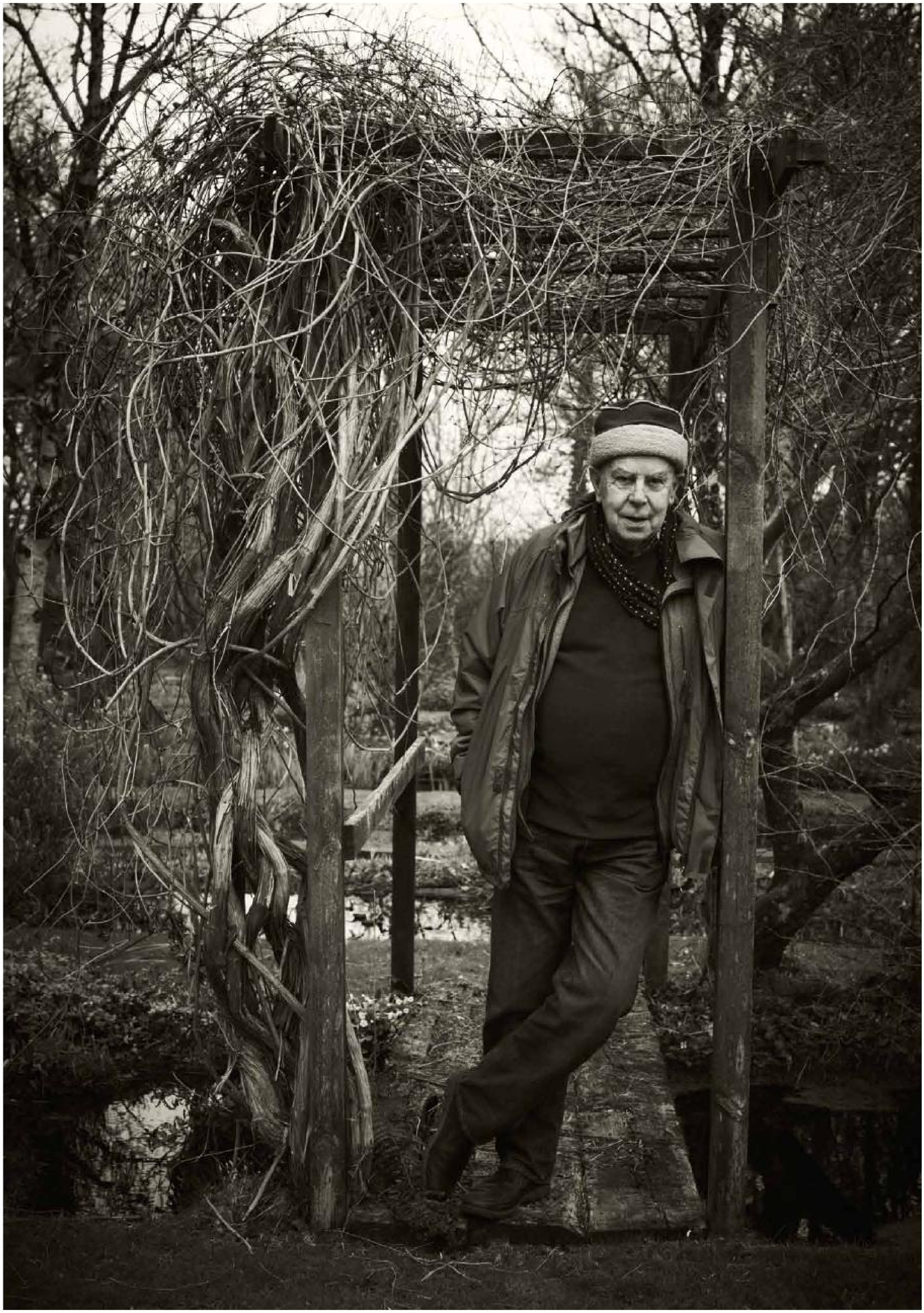
USEFUL INFORMATION

John Carter's *Fibs, Facts and Farces: Tales from the Arab World* (2012) is published by Barzipan.

Website www.rowdengardens.com

NEXT MONTH Jim Buckland and Sarah Wain at West Dean.

> *"All aquatic grasses behave like Attila the Hun"*



The vegetable garden at Perch Hill, in East Sussex – beautiful, bounteous and practical.

JONATHAN BUCKLEY / DESIGN SARAH RAVEN AT PERCH HILL

HOW TO CREATE
THE ROMANCE OF A

Cottage garden

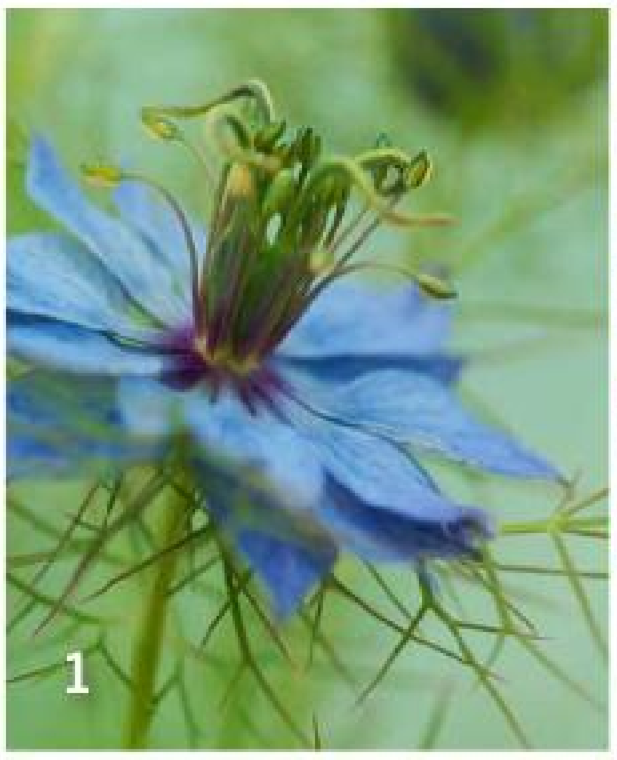
For many people, the informal charm of a cottage garden is irresistible. But how can you recreate the atmosphere if you don't have the prerequisite chocolate-box cottage and want to avoid your plants looking a complete jumble? Think instead of gardening hand-in-hand with nature; using materials sympathetic to the local landscape; and cultivating a paradise where plants, livestock and produce thrive in harmony. Turn the page to discover the key principles.

WORDS **FRANCINE RAYMOND**

Planting principles

The first cottage gardens grew fruit, vegetables and household herbs to nourish their occupants and domestic stock, with a few flowers grown for pleasure, giving the impression of a vegetable garden overwhelmed by self-seeded blooms. Cottage gardening today is no longer confined to the countryside. Even if you garden in a city or the suburbs you can attain something of the look by growing your vegetables in among the flowerbeds, or in a separate plot with four-bed rotation, interplanted with companion plants to attract pollinators and distract pests. Grow local varieties of fruit trees underplanted with bulbs, and pleach, cordon or fan-train specimens to act as boundaries. Soft fruit is best grown in a fruit cage, alongside beehives to pollinate fruit, and poultry houses, so their occupants can finish off windfalls.

Herbs are the foundation of cottage gardens – grown as low hedges, in potagers or pots – for their medicinal and culinary properties or to perfume household linens. When it comes to flowers, grow for scent and to bring into the house by the armful. My first flowerbed was entirely self-seeded: a brief riot of pot marigolds, opium poppies, feverfew and love-in-a-mist spread from the compost mulch. Frothy cow parsley, buttercups and daisies are perfect for cottage gardening but need firm management, so it's better to substitute with their cultivated cousins. Keep hens, call ducks and doves for their eggs, manure and charms.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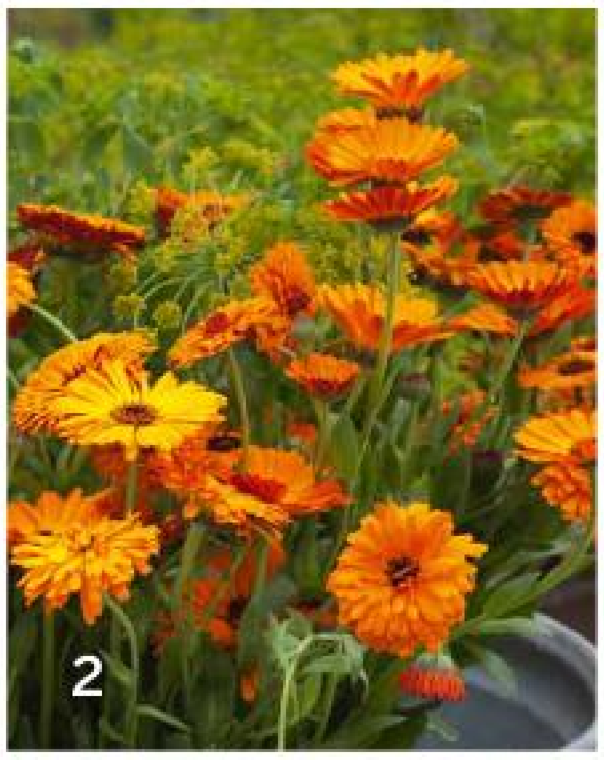
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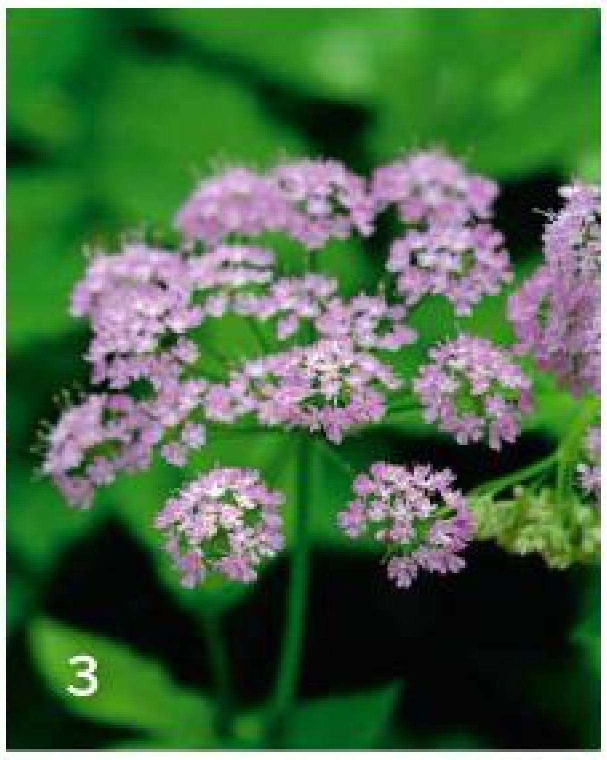
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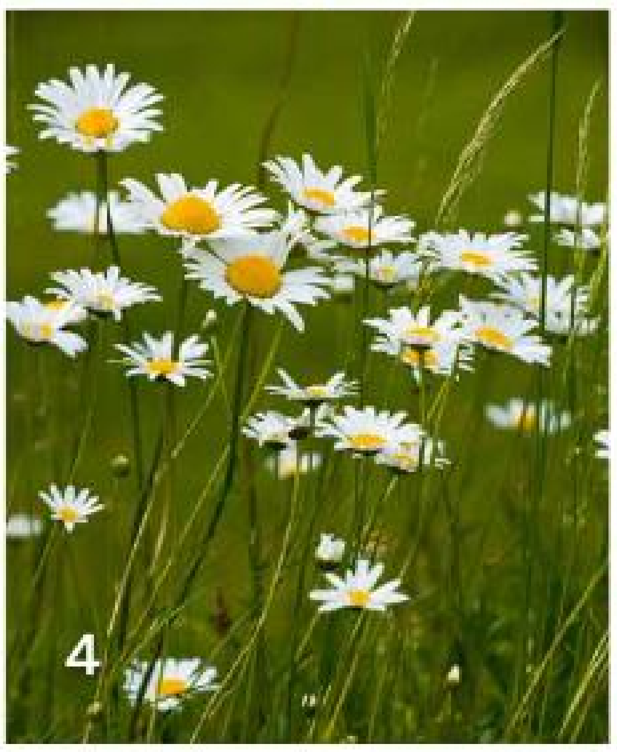
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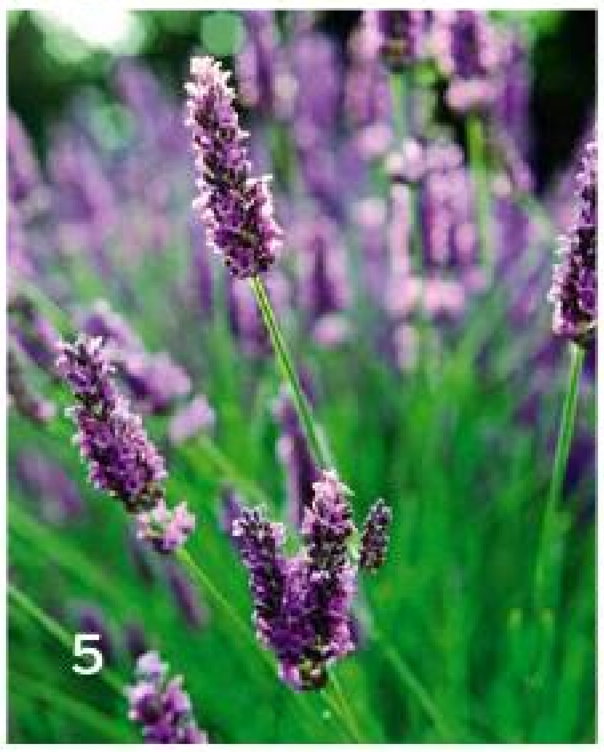
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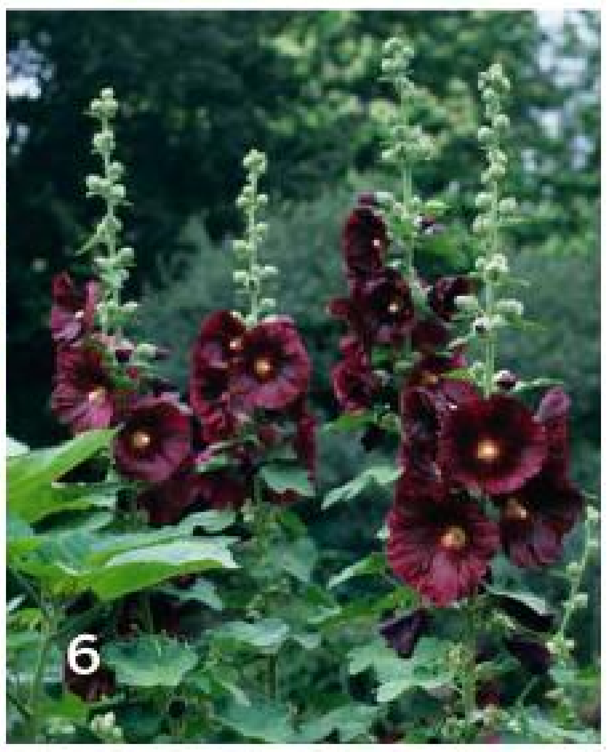
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Key plants to get the cottage look

1 Love-in-a-mist
Nigella damascena 'Miss Jekyll' (pictured) or the darker *N.* 'Midnight Blue' are perfect and will happily self-seed.

2 Pot marigold
Calendula officinalis 'Indian Prince' is a wonderful vibrant orange. The petals are good in rice pudding and salads.

3 Umbellifers
Cow parsley alternatives include *Angelica* 'Ebony', *Cenolophium denudatum* or *Chaerophyllum hirsutum* 'Roseum' (pictured).

4 Daisy-like flowers
Grow oxeyes in the meadow, feverfew in the herb garden, and echinacea, rudbeckia and argyranthemum in the beds.

5 Lavender
Lavandula x *intermedia* 'Grosso' (pictured) is a lovely blue-purple and 'Impress Purple' is great for fragrance.

6 Hollyhocks (*Alcea*)
A classic cottage garden plant. Can be prone to rust, so grow as a biennial or try *x Alcalthaea suffrutescens* 'Parkallee' instead.

Others plants to try

Perennials, annuals & shrubs
Foxgloves, lupins, pinks, alliums, candytuft, sweet Williams, delphiniums, geraniums, achillea, aquilegias, phlox, cornflowers, nasturtiums, poppies, forget-me-knots, box, hebes and old-fashioned roses.

Climbers
Small-flowered clematis, and honeysuckle for fragrance and vertical interest. *Lonicera periclymenum,* the indigenous woodbine, grows up to 10m tall.

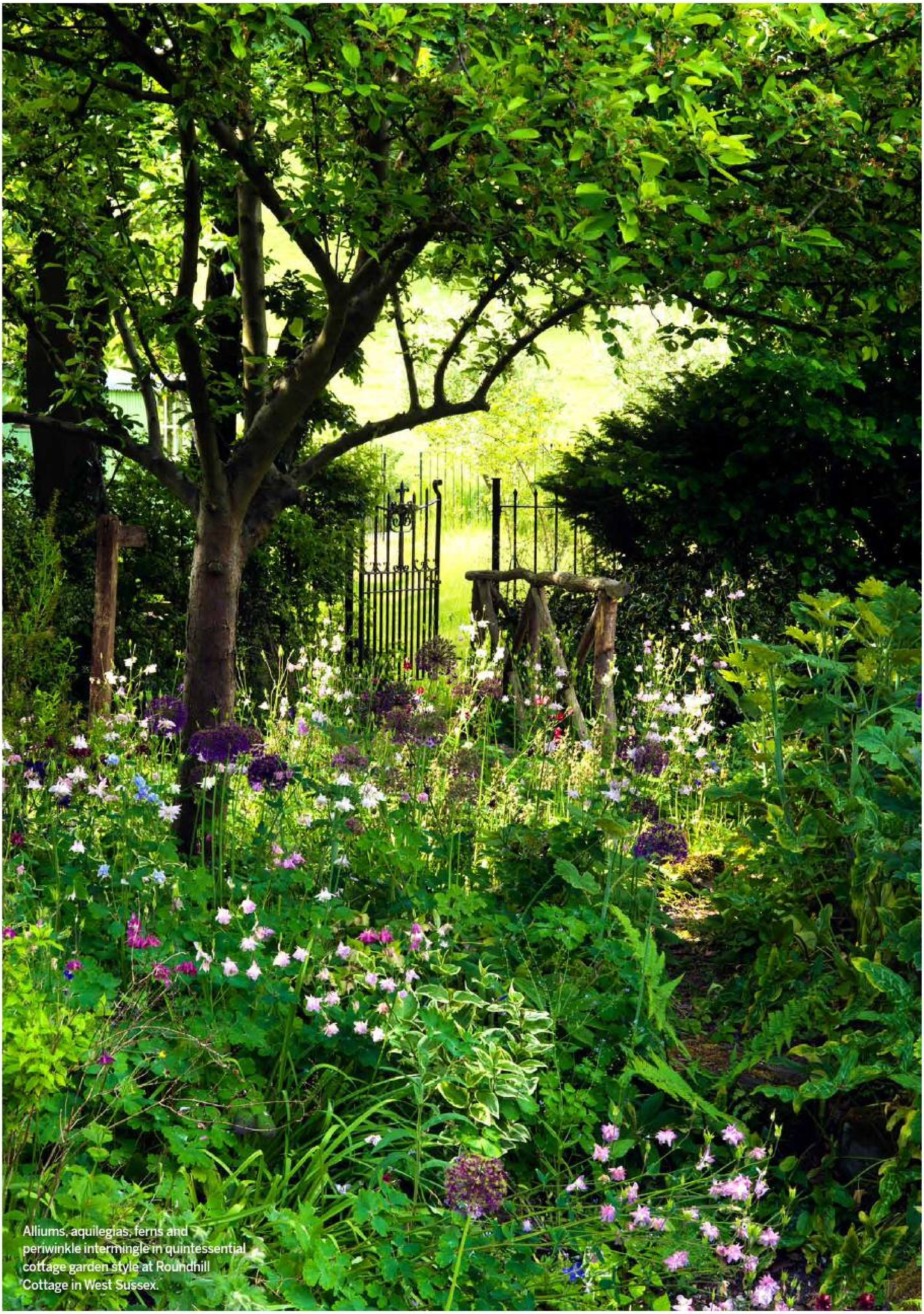
Trees
Grow quince *Cydonia oblonga* 'Champion' for blossom, leaves and fruit. Also good are damsons, gages, cherry, mulberry, medlar and hazel.

Vegetables
Grow what you enjoy eating, however, bear in mind that many vegetables are pleasing to look at too, including chard, artichokes and Tuscan kale.

Herbs
Sage in all its colourful forms, as well as dill, thyme, rosemary, fennel, chamomile and mint.

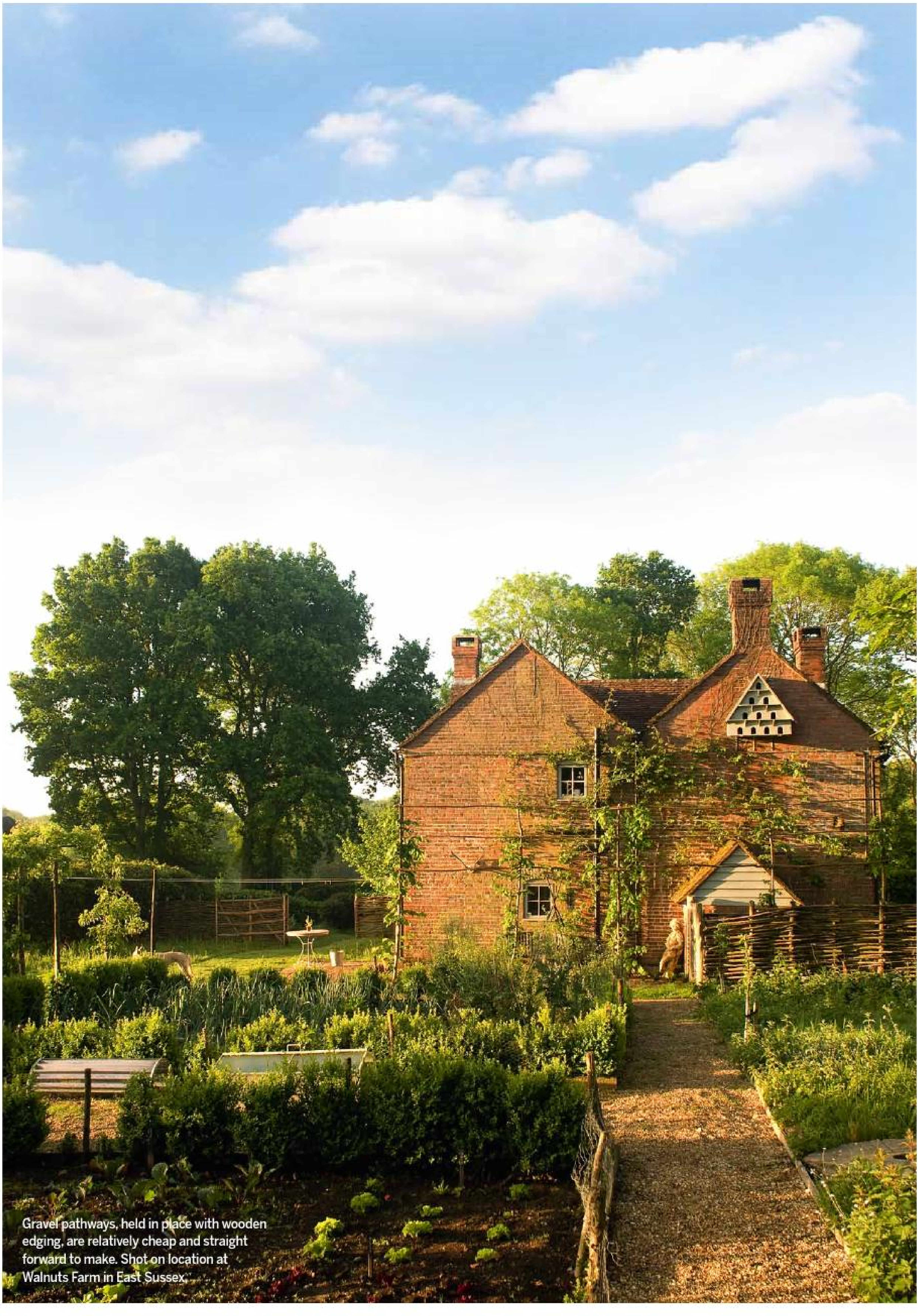
Pot plants
Display auriculas and pelargoniums in terracotta pots.

1 CATHERINE WOOD / ALAMY. 2 SUZIE GIBBONS / GAP PHOTOS. 3 RM FLORAL. 4 BOB GIBBONS / ALAMY.
5 JACQUI HURST / ALAMY. 6 STEFFEN HAUSER / BOTANIKFOTO / ALAMY



Alliums, aquilegias, ferns and periwinkle intermingle in quintessential cottage garden style at Roundhill Cottage in West Sussex.

NICOLA STOCKEN TOMKINS / THE GARDEN COLLECTION



Gravel pathways, held in place with wooden edging, are relatively cheap and straight forward to make. Shot on location at Walnuts Farm in East Sussex.

NICK IVINS AND BELLA PRINGLE / THE RUSTIC SHOOT LOCATION HOUSE WWW.WALNUTSFARM.CO.UK / 01435 863 691

Layout & structure

Historically, a cottage garden layout developed naturally around the dwelling, as a plot surrounded by hedges and crossed by practical paths. Modern cottage gardeners should avoid too much hard landscaping and ideally all materials should be local. Follow the vernacular style or use similar materials to those of your house.

Although the overall atmosphere is one of informality, a cottage garden is often divided into separate plots: for cut flowers, for produce, and for livestock. These areas are usually hedged for protection from the elements, for privacy and for effect. Most successful gardens have a strong design backbone, softened with drifts of close-packed planting, giving the impression that all the plants have self-seeded. This casual artlessness is labour-intensive.

Grassed areas should be left long, but with shorter grass paths mown through for ease of use, paved randomly with stepping stones for safe winter access to livestock. Wildflower meadows can be achieved with patience, plug plants or seeded mats. Secure perimeter fences to keep out destructive wildlife should be disguised with indigenous hedging or clothed in climbers such as honeysuckle, small-flowered clematis or rambler roses, and walls can be used to protect trained fruit trees and vines. If it's worth highlighting, a gap – fenced with a rustic gate – leading the eye to the landscape beyond makes a special feature.

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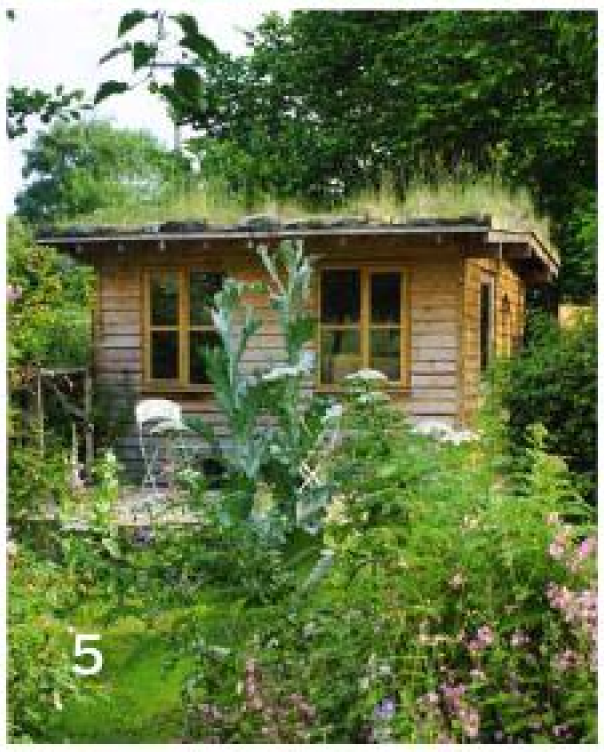
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1 LIZ EDDISON / THE GARDEN COLLECTION, 2 LEIGH CLAPP / GAP PHOTOS / DESIGN: MICHAEL COOKE, 3 JOHN GLOVER / ALAMY, 4 MADDIE THORNHILL / GAP PHOTOS, 5 HOWARD RICE / GAP PHOTOS, 6 FRIEDRICH STRAUSS / GAP PHOTOS

Key elements

1 Boundaries
Fence panels made from woven willow work well, as does picket fencing. New timber fences can be painted or stained.

4 Edging
Use sunken treated timber or rusted metal to contain paving materials. Old twisted rope edging can look good.

2 Gates
Vintage metal gates work well next to hedges. Or use simple wooden gates with timber gateposts to divide.

5 Outbuildings
Grow a green roof on your shed or cover with thatch or cedar shingles. Paint the exterior or cover with corrugated iron.

3 Paths
Search for salvaged bricks for an informal look. Alternative surfaces include hoggin, cinder, gravel or bark chippings.

6 Seating
Avoid brightly coloured or plastic seating. Vintage styles work well or paint new chairs in muted tones.

Other materials

Weathered wood and distressed painted woodwork all complete the cottagey look. Search in builders and reclamation yards, scavenge in skips and at car boot sales.

Hazel or willow staves, poles and sticks, for staking and fencing can be bought from local wildlife conservation woods where it is coppiced sustainably.

Brick, flint and stone can be sourced from reclamation yards or online.

Galvanised or rusted metal are options for containers, edging and stakes. Farm shops and car boot sales are reliable sources.

Aged terracotta is a sympathetic material for planters, tiles and edging. Painting with yoghurt can speed up the ageing process. Ensure pots are frost-resistant.

Slate table-tops and shelves are available from reclamation yards. Use them with brick piers for all-weather dining areas. Crushed slate can be used for paths.

Equipment & furnishings

It is in its detail that a garden succeeds or fails. As you look out on to your cottage garden, nothing should jar. All should be homegrown, handmade and vintage. Your colour palette should be muted. I find colours with a little burnt sienna in them settle nicely into the landscape. Though the modern cottage gardener should not be hidebound by the past and may even occasionally break the rules by using stronger colours and more graphic shapes, too much of the new mars the atmosphere.

Bring the inside outside. Transform a simple wooden table with a fabric tablecloth, a bunch of garden flowers in a jam jar, a few candles in a storm lantern; cover your garden bench with plump cushions and rig up an awning with a cotton sheet, a few poles and guy ropes. Cook al fresco in a brick or terracotta oven or metal fire-basket, with wood and kindling gathered from your plot; pop wooden seed boxes of growing herbs and micro-greens in the middle of the table. A bright yellow omelette from your hens' homelaid eggs, a salad of leaves and herbs, with berry puddings, all washed down with elderflower champagne – what better way to enjoy the fruits of your labour?

STOKES BOMFORD LT

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1 HEATHER EDWARDS / GAP PHOTOS 2, 3 & 4 JASON INGRAM 5 LYNN KEDDIE / GAP PHOTOS 6 JULIETTE WADE / GAP PHOTOS

Key accessories

1 Have fun choosing recycled containers made from old packaging. Try vintage apple crates and wooden seed trays .

4 Search for antique tools online or at car boot sales. Functional is good, but the odd tool for display is okay. Buy garden besoms and bristle brooms.

2 Use pea sticks or twigs, and galvanised or rusted metal stakes as plant supports. Hazel poles and woven willow make attractive, strong supports for climbing plants.

5 Basic industrial lighting may be necessary for safety and security, but outdoor dining should be candle-lit.

3 Allow plenty of room for outdoor dining, choosing sturdy, good-looking furniture. Mismatched chairs can be painted to look like a set.

6 Old fruit ladders or garden ladders leaning against trees make sympathetic garden structures. Pairs of stepladders can be adapted to hold plants.

Recommended stockists

www.andrewcrace.com
Wooden garden furniture, plant labels and bamboo cloches.

www.gardenandwood.co.uk
Antique and vintage garden tools, furniture and ephemera.

www.gdtimberdesigns.co.uk
Poultry houses.

www.lassco.co.uk
Garden salvage.

www.otgw.co.uk
Vintage and new garden equipment and accessories.

www.salvo.co.uk
Directory of garden salvage dealers.

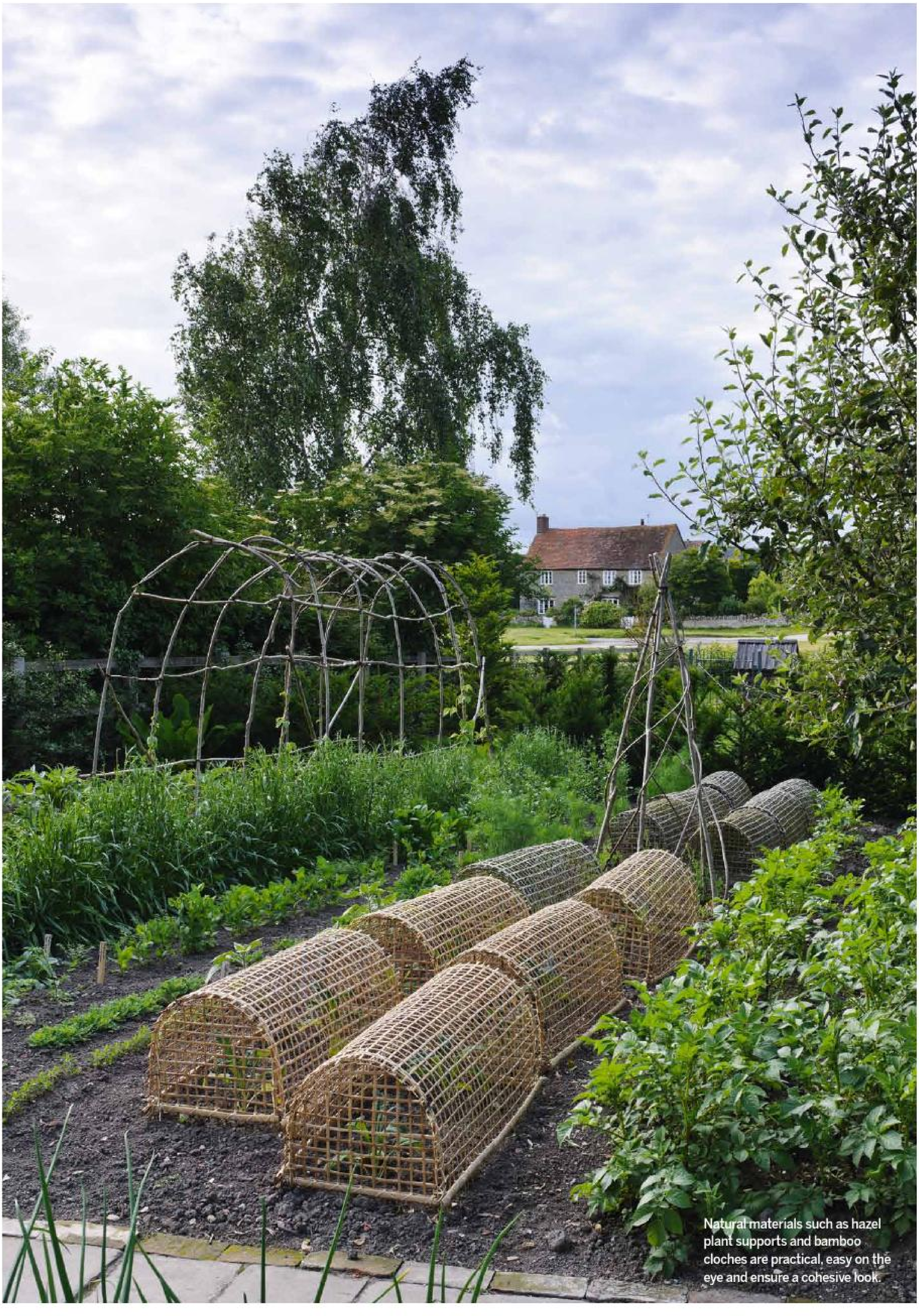
www.thevintagegardener.com
Tools and garden furniture.

Societies

www.bbka.org.uk
Beekeeping advice.

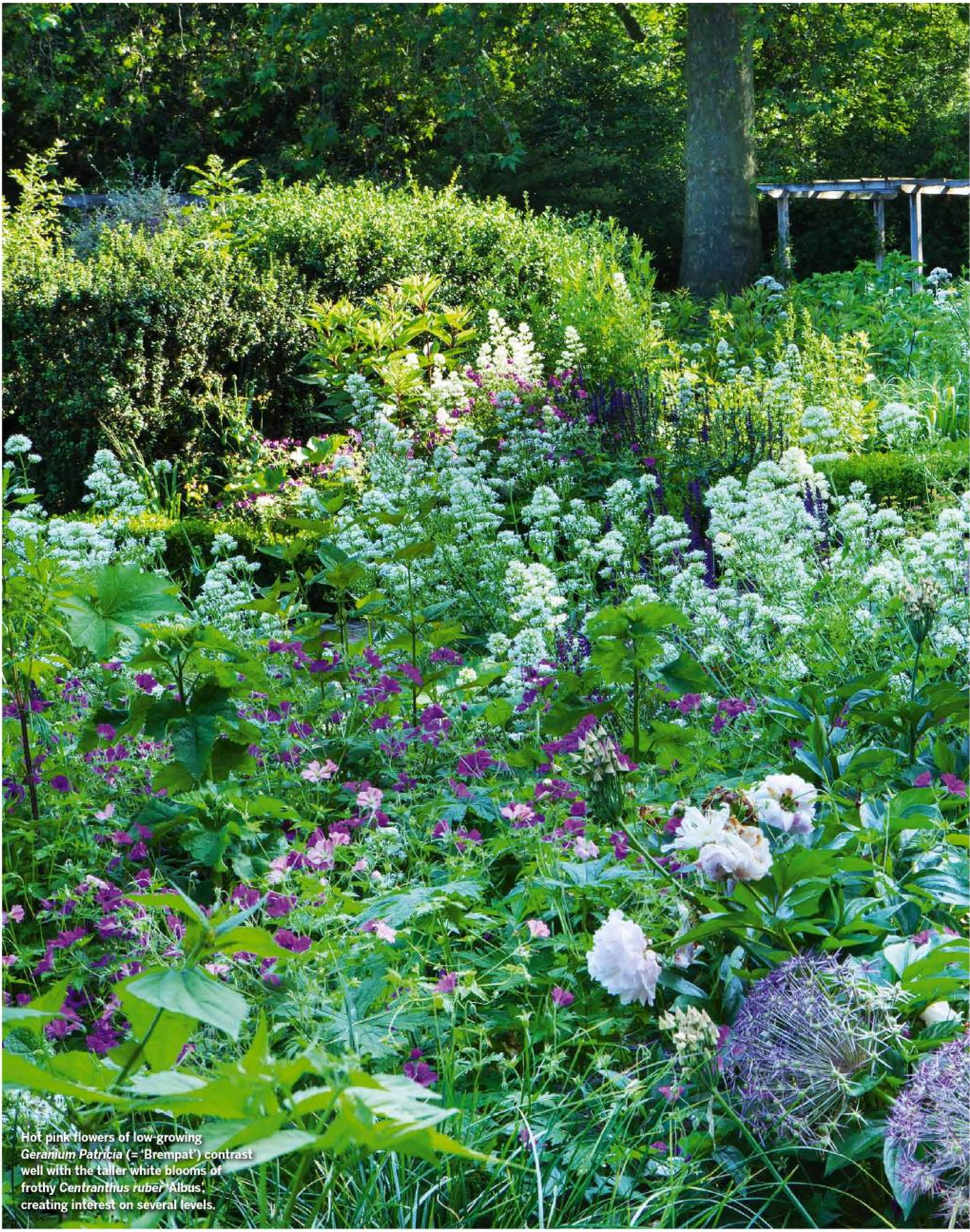
www.thecottagegardensociety.org.uk
General information.

www.henkeepersassociation.co.uk
Advice on keeping poultry.



Natural materials such as hazel plant supports and bamboo cloches are practical, easy on the eye and ensure a cohesive look.

JASON INGRAM



Hot pink flowers of low-growing *Geranium Patricia* (= 'Brempat') contrast well with the taller white blooms of frothy *Centranthus ruber* 'Albus', creating interest on several levels.

Garden romance

The Old English Garden in Battersea Park has been designed to lead the eye through multiple levels of gorgeous planting combinations

WORDS **JOJO TULLOH** PHOTOGRAPHS **MARIANNE MAJERUS**

In brief

Name Old English Garden.
What A formal design planted for a wild and romantic effect by designer Sarah Price.
Where Next to the cricket ground in Battersea Park, London (enter via the North West gate).
Size 70m x 50m.
Climate Shady near the walls, and hot and dry in the centre. Watering is a challenge.
Soil Free-draining London park soil, well mulched over the years with the park's own compost.
Points of interest Imaginative combinations of perennials, grasses and roses 'drift' from bed to bed. Don't miss Thrive's impressive herb and vegetable garden nearby, where plants from the garden are for sale.

The Old English Garden in Battersea Park is what its designer Sarah Price calls a "private pocket in a busy city". Built in the early 1900s, the garden's high brick walls conceal an unabashedly romantic planting scheme with beds overflowing with froth and colour. In high summer it is a heavily scented haven, with drifts of long-flowering perennials, arches hung with old roses and a pergola wound around with thick ropes of wisteria that snake out from a gnarled trunk as thick as a well-grown oak.

This 70m x 50m garden is a very different kind of project from Sarah's high-profile designs for the Chelsea Flower Show or the Olympic Park. Here it is not professionals but trainee gardeners working with the horticultural therapy charity Thrive that have brought Sarah's complex planting scheme to life, helped by an injection of cash from London perfume house, Jo Malone.

The idea was to create a high-maintenance teaching garden with a mix of perennials and grasses that would gradually grow and fill the garden, providing lots of work for the Thrive gardeners along the way. In 2008, when Sarah first started working with Thrive, the garden was looking pretty bare. Although loved by locals as a secret space, there was little money for planting.

All that changed when Sarah became involved. The first idea was to create a hot modern palette with a vibrant colour scheme reminiscent of the gardens of Great Dixter in East Sussex. The involvement of Jo Malone and a greater emphasis on scented flowers meant roses became a big part of the picture and so the planting was rethought.

Sarah combines eye-catching ornamental grasses such as *Deschampsia cespitosa* 'Goldtau' or *Stipa calamagrostis* alongside the petal heavy blooms of old roses such as *Rosa* 'Cardinal de Richelieu' or the very fragrant white *R.* 'Boule de Neige' and the striking *Paeonia* 'Claire de Lune'. The effect is supercharged yet airy. The colours are those of an English hedgerow, with masses of tiny white and cream flowers thrown into relief by dense clumps of greens, pinks and purples. In high summer not an inch of bare earth can be seen.

"Normally I would lay plants out as I go," says Sarah, "but in this case I was giving Thrive planting lists and quantities. In retrospect I could have made it simpler. It's not such a tightly controlled garden. I had to let them take control and juggle plants."

The garden contains 25 beds in an intricate geometric design, broken up by brick paths with a lily pond in the centre of the garden. The formal nature of the garden's design provided some challenges. "The 80s brick paving is not that sympathetic to the original design so I tried to soften it," says Sarah. Throughout the garden, low-growing clumps of the hot magenta *Geranium* Patricia (= 'Brempat'), mounds of *Thymus pulegioides* 'Aureus', *Origanum laevigatum* 'Herrenhausen' and *Erigeron karvinskianus* spread out over paths to draw attention from the hard landscaping and create a feeling of abundance.

"There was no sense of flow, so I used a series of long-flowering plants," says Sarah. Plants are echoed from bed to bed in a way that evokes a self-seeding effect. The dark purple spikes of *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna' are planted alongside the lighter purple spikes of the butterfly-attracting *Stachys officinalis* 'Hummelo' with *Geranium* Patricia (= 'Brempat') scrambling through ▷

Above from left to right *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna' combines with *Geranium* Patricia (= 'Brempat'); *Persicaria* x *fennica*; *Rosa* x *odorata* 'Mutabilis'.

Opposite, top Self-seeding *Centranthus ruber* 'Albus' breaks the formality of the brick paving.

Opposite, bottom The gardeners at Thrive took Sarah's planting lists and laid them out as drifts of plants to create a dramatic effect that mimics self seeding.

Above from left to right *Papaver somniferum*; *Digitalis lutea*; designer Sarah Price.

▷ and the dark stems of taller *Eupatorium maculatum* Atropurpureum Group 'Purple Bush' behind. The eye is drawn repeatedly to the vigorous self-seeding valerian, *Centranthus ruber* 'Albus', which needs no encouragement to spread itself.

"I like gradients of colour. If you think about a watercolour brush stroke, the way the pigment grades away, this is the effect I was looking for with repetition of species and 'theme' plants from bed to bed." Sarah also made the challenge of a walled space shaded at its perimeter by tall plane trees one of the garden's virtues. She used the difference in temperature and light to create interest. "The garden is shaded on the outside and hot on the inside. The periphery of the garden is the focus of spring interest. While these spring beds are at their best, the sun-loving plants in the central beds are gathering up their energy."

Sarah's favourite shady bed is planted with a combination of *Helleborus orientalis*, *Digitalis lutea*, ferns *Polypodium vulgare* and *Polystichum aculeatum* and the deep purple honesty, *Lunaria annua*. "I don't plant for single impact, so I try and make sure not just one but, say, six plant varieties are at their best. If you think about the impact of a carpet of bluebells, that's the effect I am looking for – communities of plants that work well together."

Some plants, such as the head-high *Dierama pulcherrimum*, with its wands of pink bells, are spot-planted so that the eye jumps from bed to bed, following artfully placed plants. This garden is testament not just to Sarah's skill as a designer but to the dedication of the Thrive gardeners who have learned to translate complex plans and a trolley-load of plants in pots into a living garden. They have, says Sarah, been very sensitive and have "let the plants do their thing". What is wonderful for Sarah and for any visitor is that although this garden is intricately planned, "you don't see the hand of the gardener". □

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Battersea Park, London.

Website www.batterseapark.org

Open Free and open all year round, the garden is at its most exuberant in July.

Planting for abundance

Sarah Price's fine art back ground reveals itself in the way she uses shape as much as colour. Here she has created what she calls 'froth' in three tiers.

Valeriana officinalis Reaches a height of 1.2m and carries clusters of white and pink flowers from mid summer. USDA 4a-9b†.

Selinum wallichianum Vigorous hardy perennial with flat heads of tiny white flowers. Up to 1.5m. RHS H4, USDA 6b-10b.

Cenolophium denudatum Clump-forming umbellifer with white flowers and finely divided dark leaves. Grows to 1m.

***Centranthus ruber* 'Albus'** Reaching around 60cm, this is the white form of red valerian. RHS H4, USDA 5a-8b.

Allium cristophii Another plant closer to the ground at 60cm, huge see-through spheres of mauve flowers. AGM*. RHS H7, USDA 4a-8b.

Erigeron karvinskianus The self-seeding Mexican daisy. AGM. RHS H3, USDA 6a-9b.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.
†Hardiness ratings given where available.

Opposite, top The reclaimed brick path runs past umbellifer *Cenolophium denudatum* and the purple spines of *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna' to the wooden pergola.

Opposite, bottom An avenue leads through the pergola to a view of the sundial beyond, providing a cool contrast to the hotter, rose-filled central beds grouped around the lily pond.

Sweet peas quickly run to the top of appropriate supporting structures, providing rich scent and harmonious colour combinations.

JONATHAN BUCKLEY DESIGN SARAH RAVEN

Sweet peas

This longstanding favourite has many admirable qualities, yet still requires intelligent planting

WORDS GRAHAM RICE

Graham Rice is a garden author who has published over 20 books, was a Chelsea Flower Show judge for many years, and sits on numerous Royal Horticultural Society committees. He is the author of the Transatlantic Gardener blog at transatlanticgardener.com

It would be a strange gardener indeed who failed to admire sweet peas. But is that admiration always translated into using them thoughtfully and effectively in the garden? At first, a colourful and fragrant plant that supports itself as it climbs seems to present plenty of options. But sometimes, it all goes wrong.

Too often, I think, we assume that because sweet peas have these magnificent qualities they will always show all of them off well. We want colour in the border and to pick the flowers for the house from the same plants, but is this realistic? We want to savour the scent, but assume that these tall plants – about 1.8m – should be sited away at the back of the border. We appreciate the delicate patterns in some cultivars, but the blooms may be too far away for their detail to be appreciated. And how do we support them, both effectively and elegantly?

Firstly, do not pick flowers for the house from plants growing in borders; grow a few sweet peas specifically for cutting in a less visible area. Picking flowers from beds and borders simply detracts from the display.

When planning to site sweet peas in borders there are some factors to keep in mind. The farther they are from the path or border edge, the clearer the colours you should choose; cultivars with clean, plain colours – 'selfs', as they're called, such as 'King Edward VII' and 'Janet Scott' – show up better from a distance while the subtlety of 'Allbutt Blue', and 'America' with its intricate colour patterns, is best appreciated up close. Those with the strongest scent can also be sited farther away.

Pale cultivars shine against a dark hedge, yew perhaps, or a dark-leaved shrub such as *Cotinus coggygria* 'Royal Purple'. Richly coloured flowers are best backed by paler foliage, a silver-leaved shrub such as *Teucrium fruticans*, or a golden conifer hedge.

But the most natural approach to planting combines background and support. With their tight tendrils, sweet peas are ideally adapted to clinging to shrubs and to other climbers. Use them to bring colour to early shrubs, including forsythia, which make little contribution to the summer garden. Create exciting colour combinations with foliage shrubs including purple-leaved berberis. Or direct them into summer-flowering shrubs, roses for example, choosing the colours carefully to create appealing contrasts or harmonies.

Support systems

A trellis by the door, an arch over a path, or free-standing supports by a gateway can bring plants with delicately coloured flowers closer to view. I've also grown them tumbling prolifically over a retaining wall alongside a path. Sweet peas with subtle colouring are also ideal in a vase.

Supporting sweet peas unobtrusively is almost impossible. When grown for cutting, out of the main view, robustness can be the priority; use pig wire or bamboo canes. In beds and borders, concessions must be made to style. Wigwams made of coppiced hazel- and pea-sticks suit informal cottage style and country gardens but suffer from narrowing towards the top where the plants are bushier. A ring of upright poles and branches can be more effective.

In more modern settings, narrow trellis panels formed into a vertical square are both attractive and functional, or a stout wooden stake can support a ring of chicken wire or wider meshed pig wire.

Choose individual, sweetly scented cultivars that particularly appeal and site them according to their colour. Sweet peas do indeed have magnificent qualities. It's up to us to make the best of them. □

- Turn the page for Graham's favourite scented sweet peas.

*Holds an Award of Garden Merit from the Royal Horticultural Society.

[†] Hardiness ratings given where available

1 ***Lathyrus*** **'Albutt Blue'**
A delicate picotee with a spectacular scent, the subtle and soft bluish purple edgings create a charming picture. Prolific, and good scrambling through a winter jasmine by the front door. Spencer hybrid.

2 ***L.*** **'America'**
Dating as far back as 1896 and still delightful, the flowers are prettily patterned. Plants with no white may appear; if so, buy from a different supplier next time. Grandiflora hybrid. AGM*. RHS H4†.

3 ***L.*** **'Matucana'**
Descended from the original wild sweet pea, with an exceptional fragrance, this is the one to add to a poorly scented bouquet for a boost. Grandiflora hybrid.

4 ***L.*** **'Erewhon'**
This unique reverse bicoloured variety switches the usual arrangement and features pale pinkish lavender standards above rich blue wings. Derived in part from the Turkish species *Lathyrus belinensis*. Spencer hybrid.

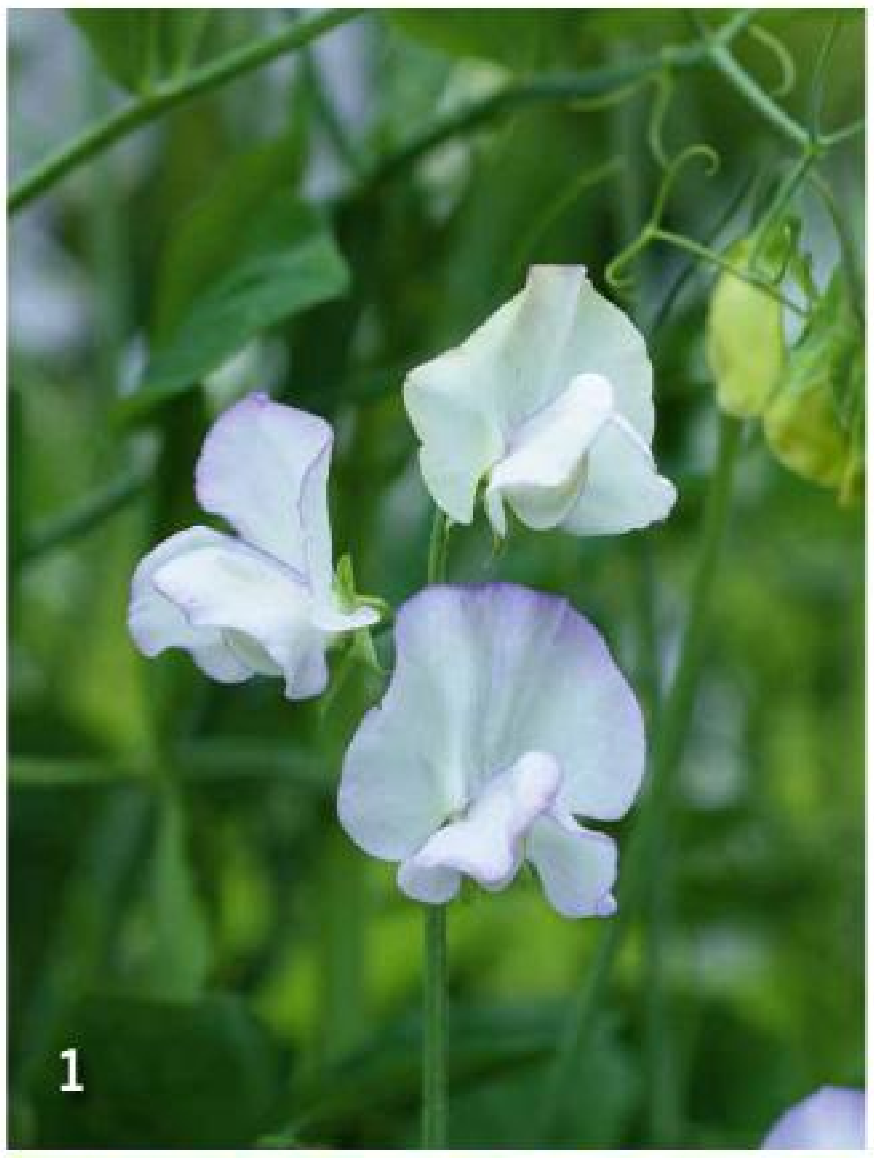
5 ***L.*** **'Karen Louise'**
Powerfully scented, 'Karen Louise' has large, beautifully waved flowers, shading to white at the very centre, and carried on strong stems, making it ideal in both the garden and the vase. Spencer hybrid.

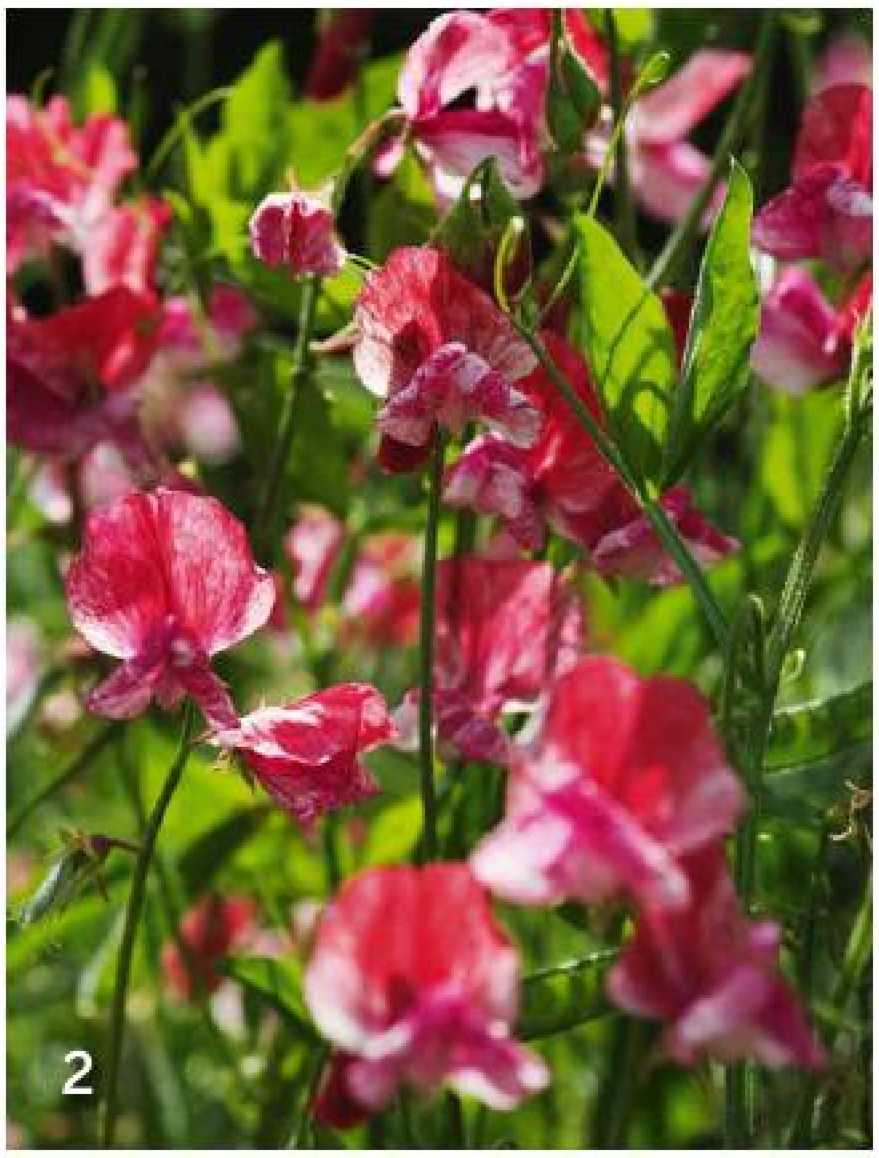
6 ***L.*** **'Janet Scott'**
Dating back to 1903, this simple classical heirloom in soft salmon pink has a hooded standard that creates the impression of an unusually substantial flower. Grandiflora hybrid. AGM. RHS H4.

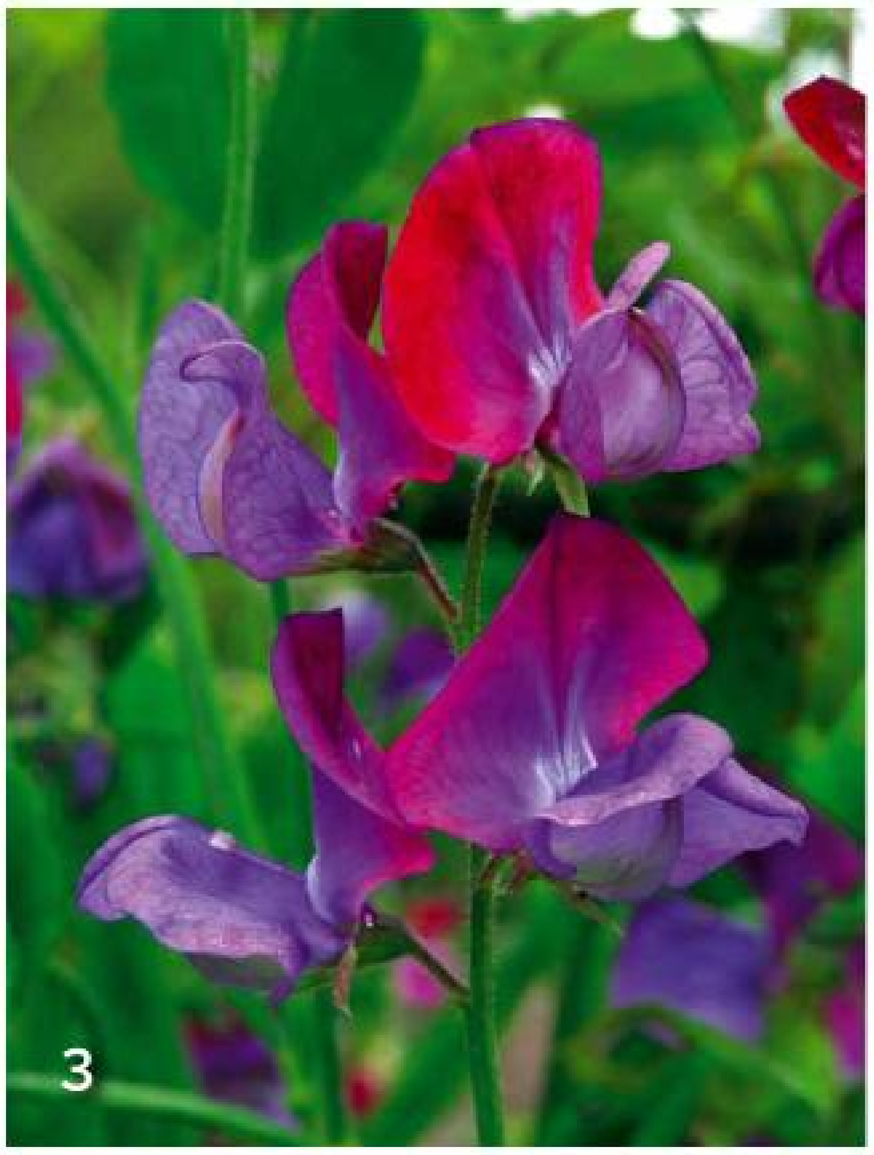
7 ***L.*** **'Black Knight'**
More a sort of chocolate bronze maroon, with a little purple often gleaming in the wings of the flower. Not clearly visible from a distance unless seen against silver or gold foliage. Grandiflora hybrid.

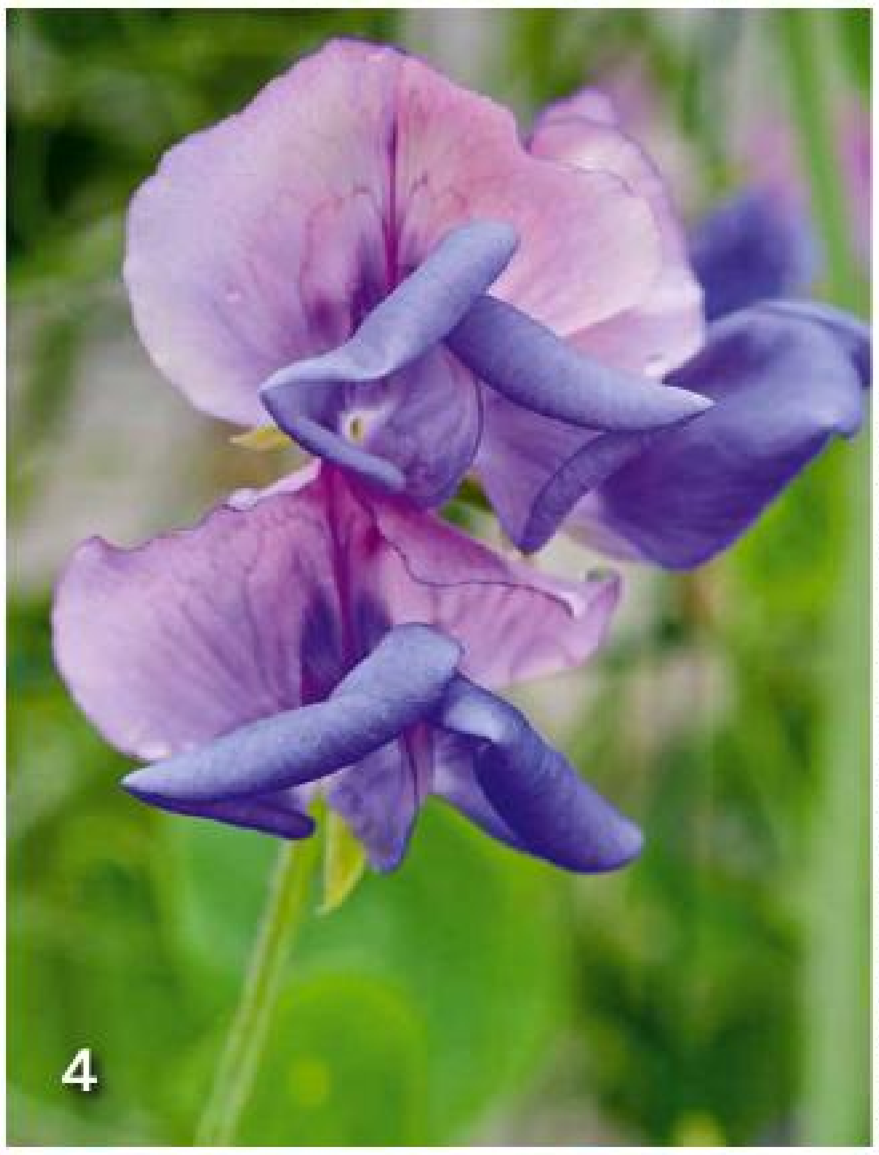
8 ***L.*** **'Bramdean'**
Raised by Victoria Wakefield at her Bramdean garden in Hampshire, this new cultivar in the old Grandiflora style is pure white, with a faint pink blush in some conditions. Modern grandiflora hybrid. AGM.

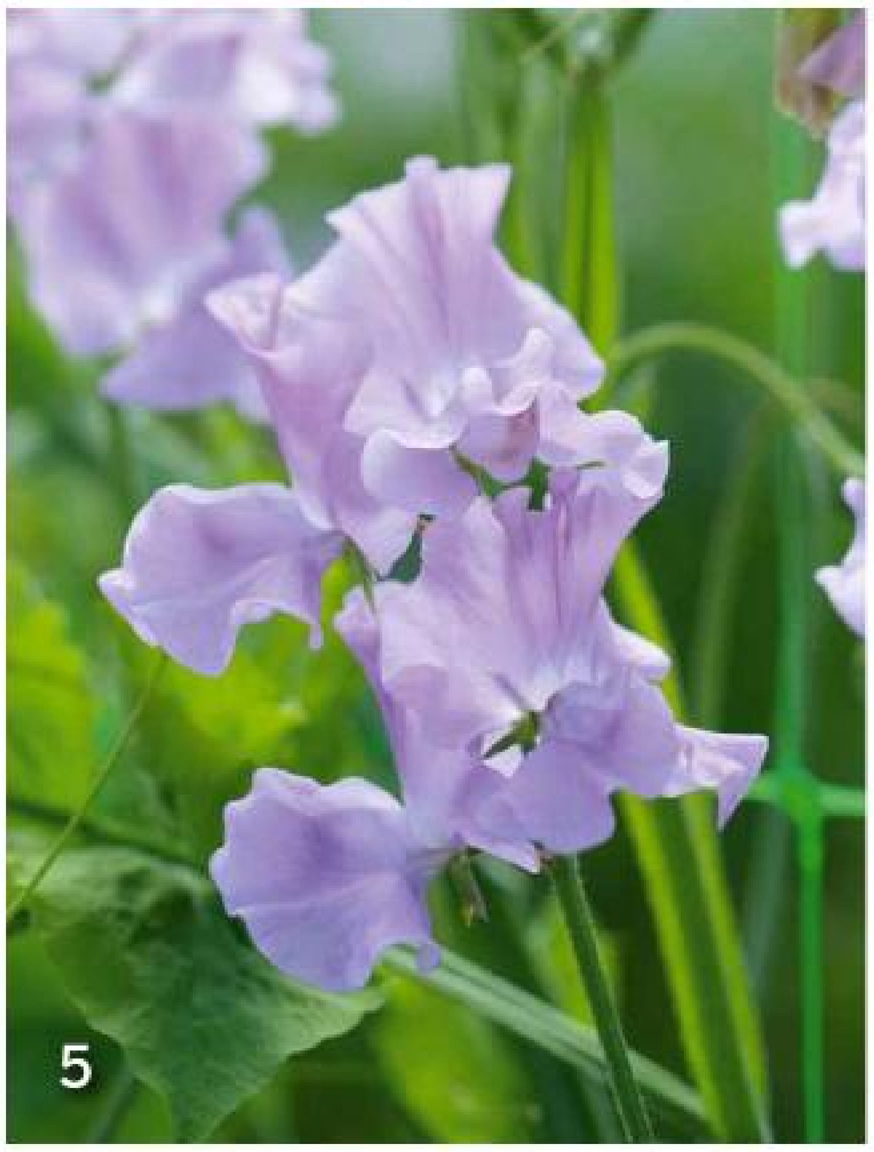
9 ***L.*** **'Fire and Ice'**
Another bicoloured variety in the old-fashioned

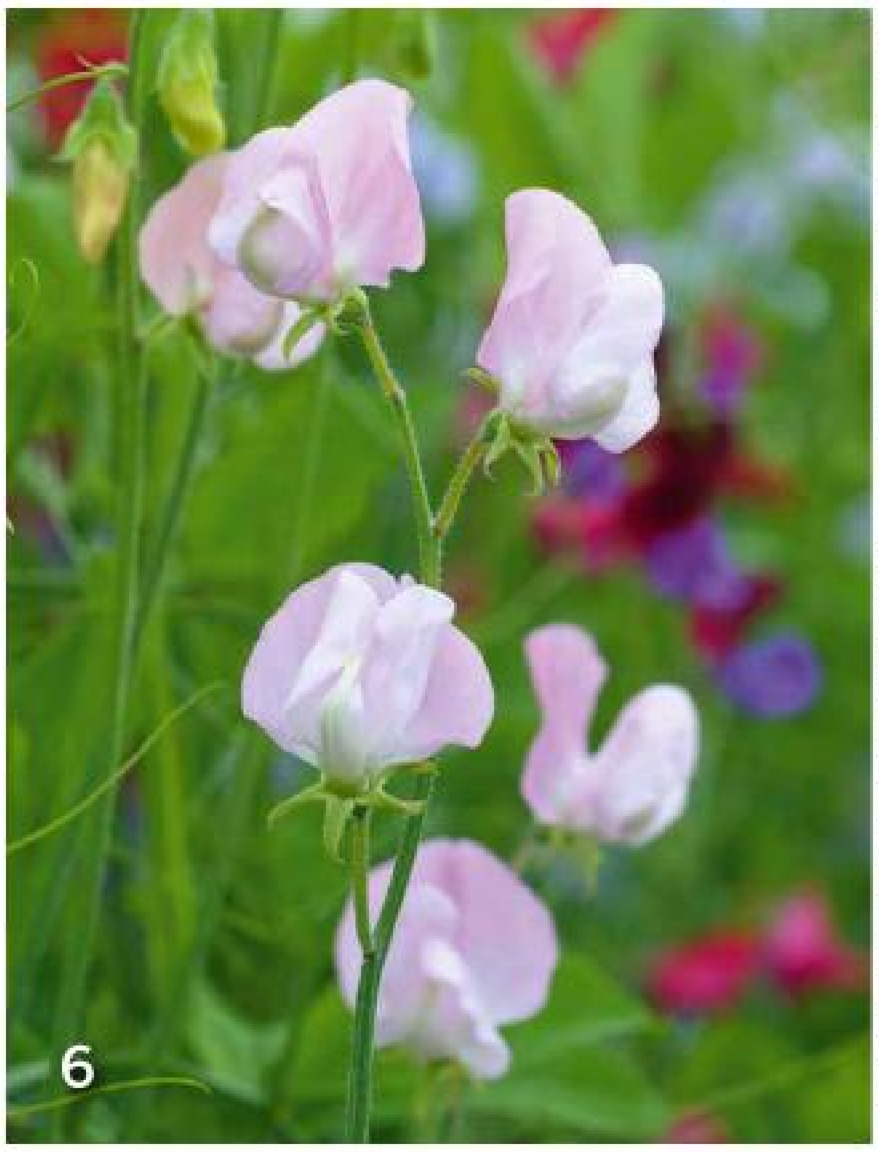




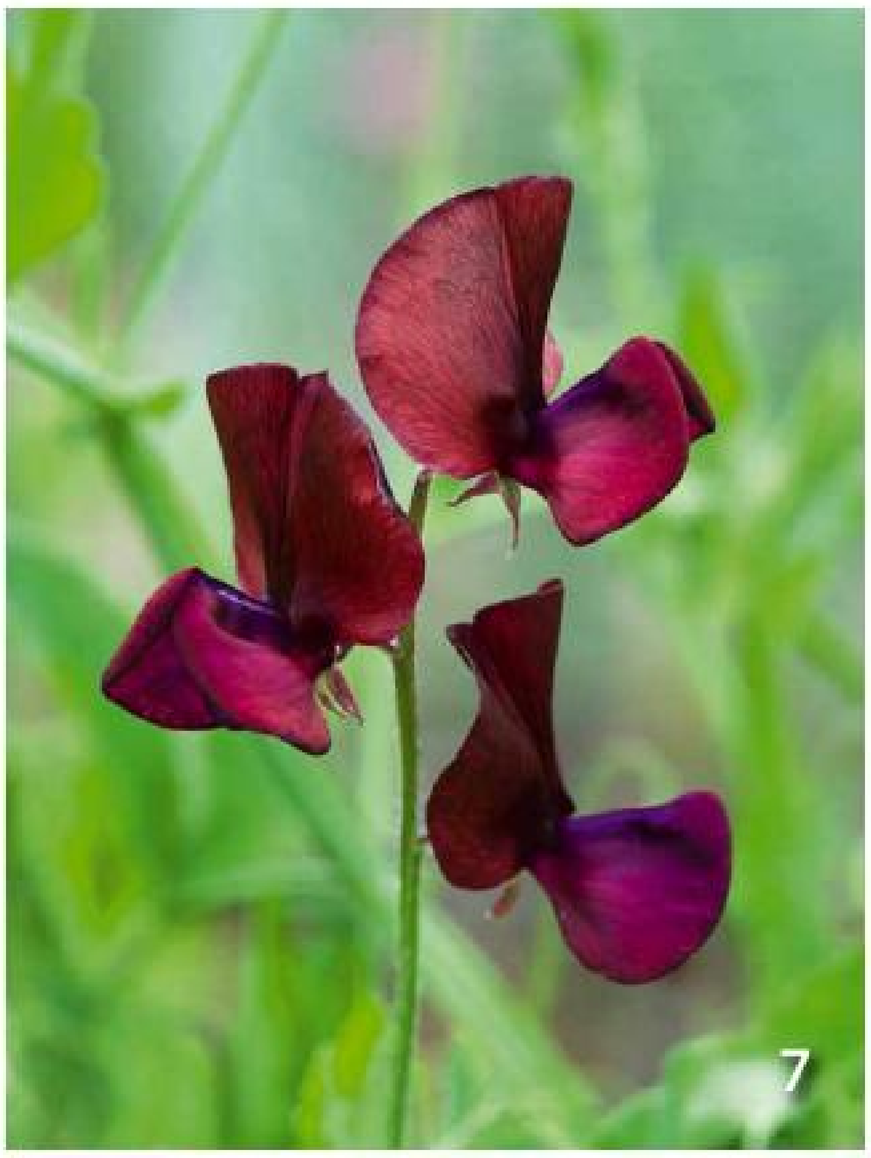








1 HOWARD RICE / GETTY, 2. VICTORIA FIRMSTON / GAP PHOTOS, 3. CUBOIMAGES SRL / ALAMY, 4. GRAHAM RICE / GARDENPHOTOS.COM, 5 & 6. HOWARD RICE / GAP PHOTOS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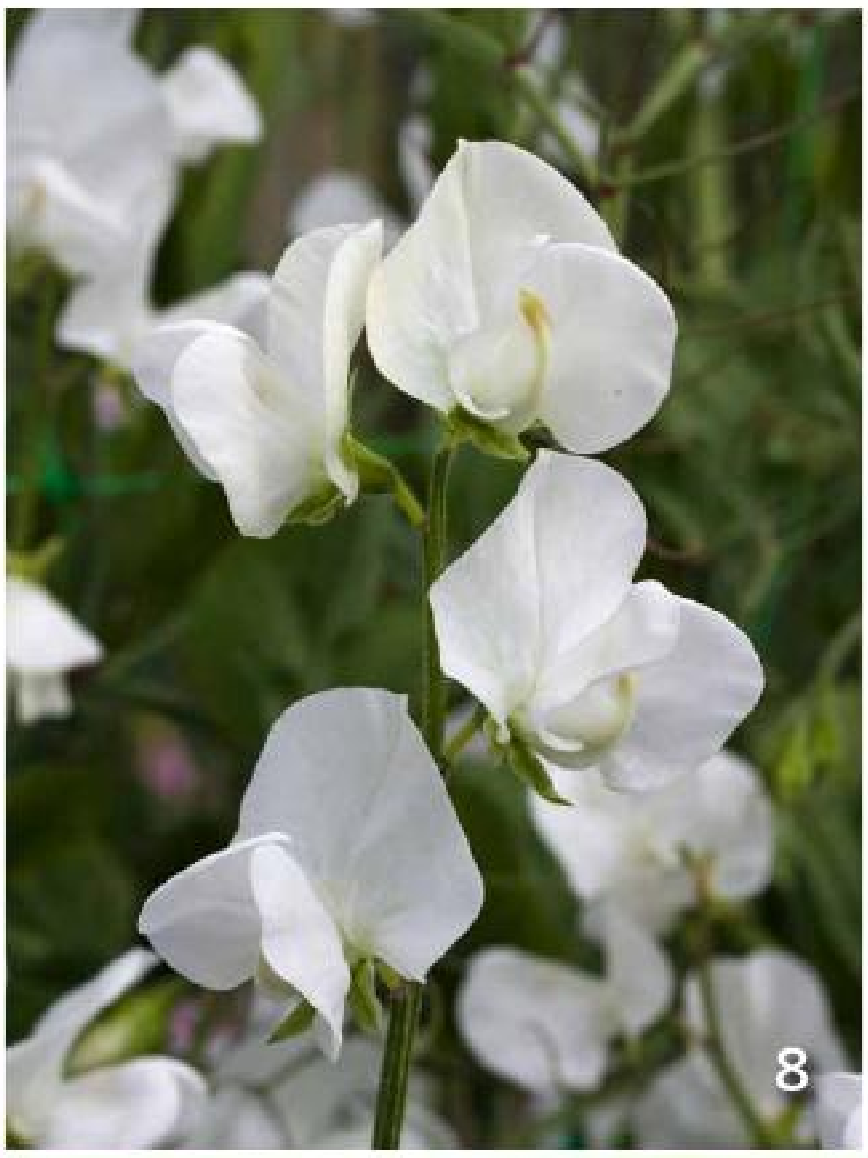
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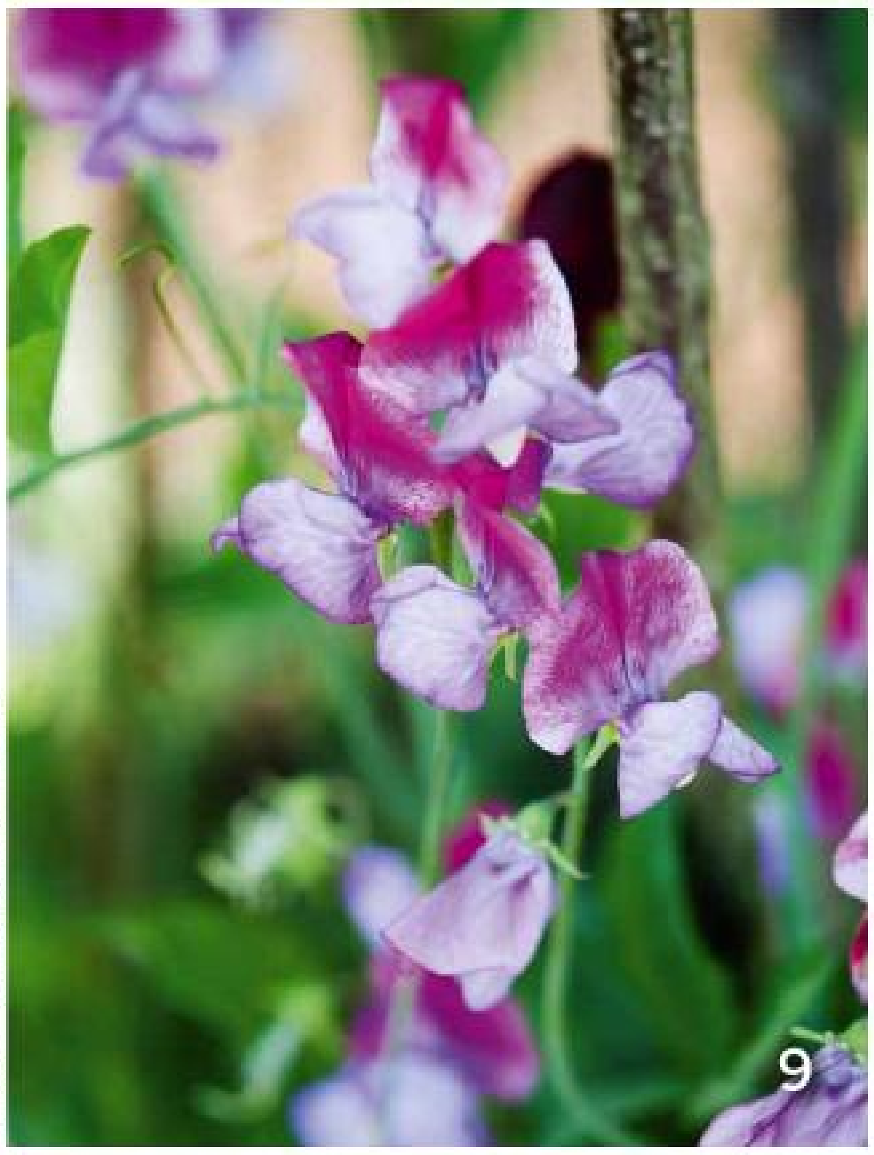
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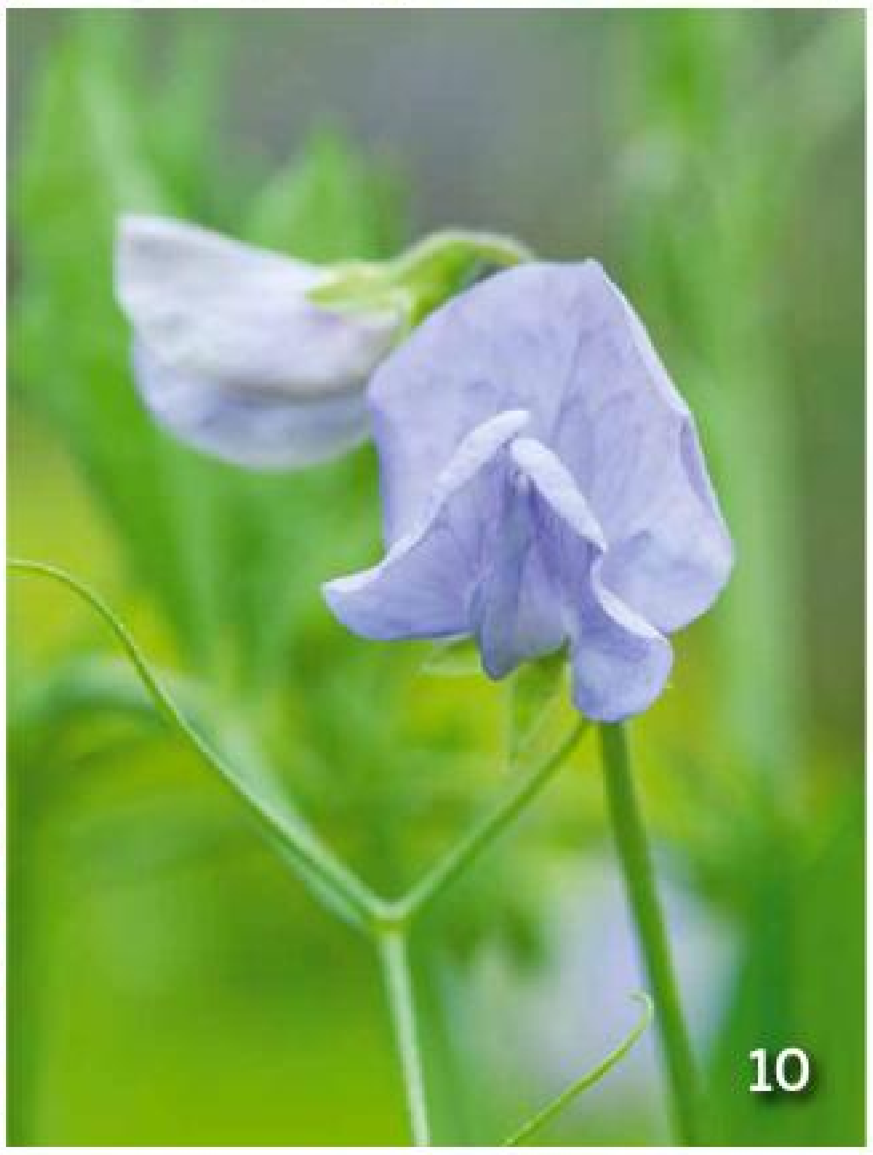
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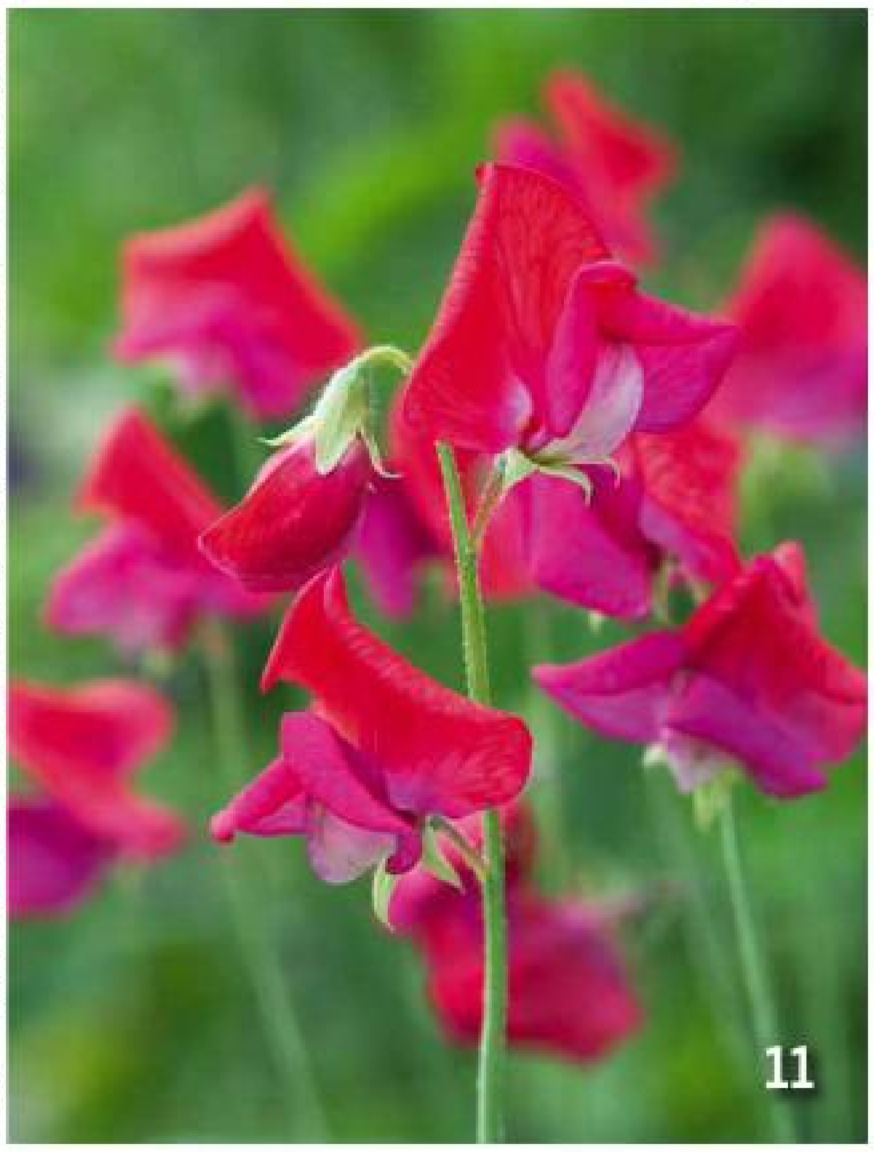
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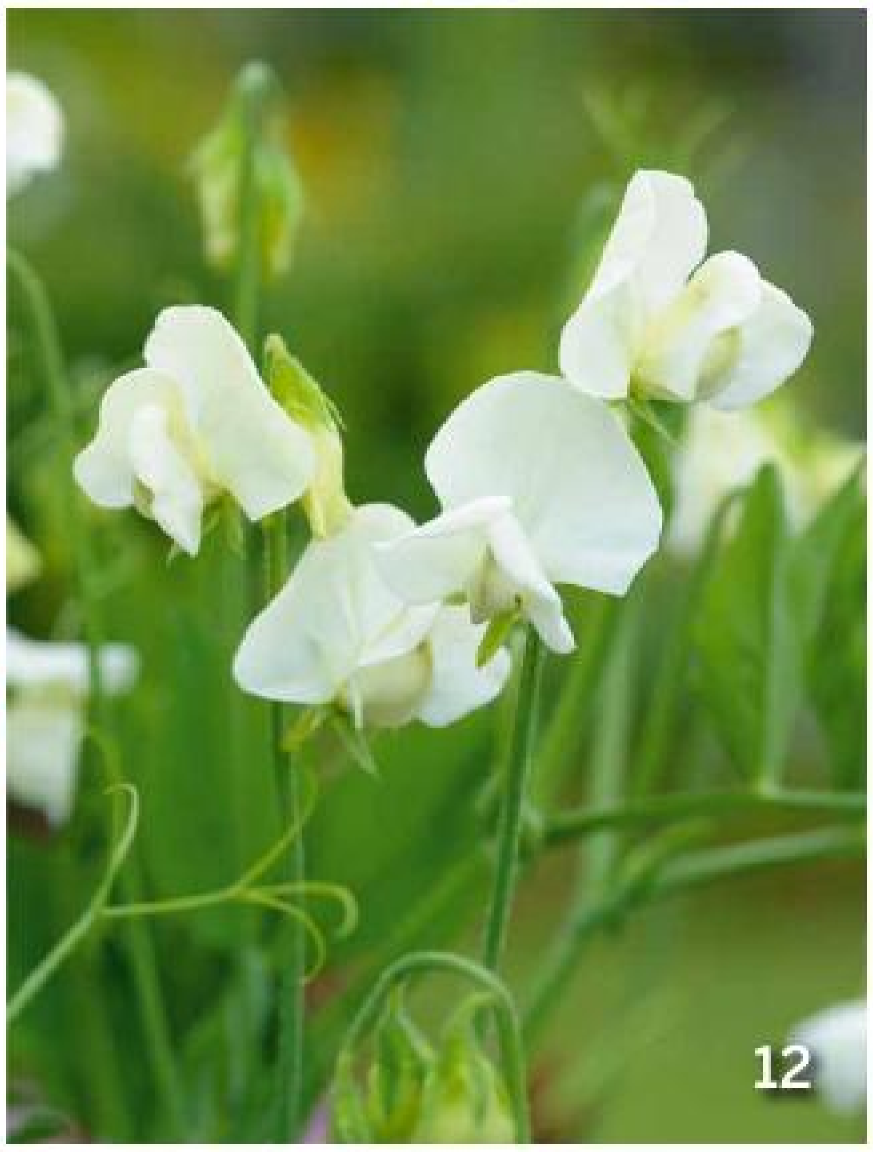
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7, 10 & 12 HOWARD RICE / GETTY 8, LEE THOMAS / GARDENWORLDIMAGES.COM 9 PAUL DEBOIS / GAP PHOTOS 11 HOWARD RICE / GAP PHOTOS

style. At its best 'Fire and Ice' has pink to red upper petals and lilac blue wings. Very vigorous. Modern grandiflora hybrid.

10 *L.* 'Flora Norton'

This classic, pale blue, old-fashioned heirloom sweet pea dates back to 1905. The purity of its simple colouring is enchanting and it features unusually large wings and relatively small seeds – though they germinate well. Grandiflora hybrid. AGM. RHS H4.

11 *L.* 'King Edward VII'

This vivid crimson red antique variety, introduced by the great Henry Eckford in 1903, is one of the best heirloom varieties in stronger colours and certainly the best red. Grandiflora hybrid. AGM. RHS H4.

12 *L.* 'Mrs Collier'

Once described overenthusiastically as 'primrose', the yellow buds open to creamy white flowers. With its especially strong scent this is one of the essential antique varieties. Grandiflora hybrid.

USEFUL INFORMATION

The National Collection of Sweet Peas is held in Sussex by Roger Parsons. Group visits can be made in June by appointment. Tel 01243 673770, www.rpsweetpeas.co.uk

The Sweet Pea Book by Graham Rice (Batsford) is aimed at gardeners rather than exhibitors. There's also *Sweet Peas: An Essential Guide* by Roger Parsons (Crowood).

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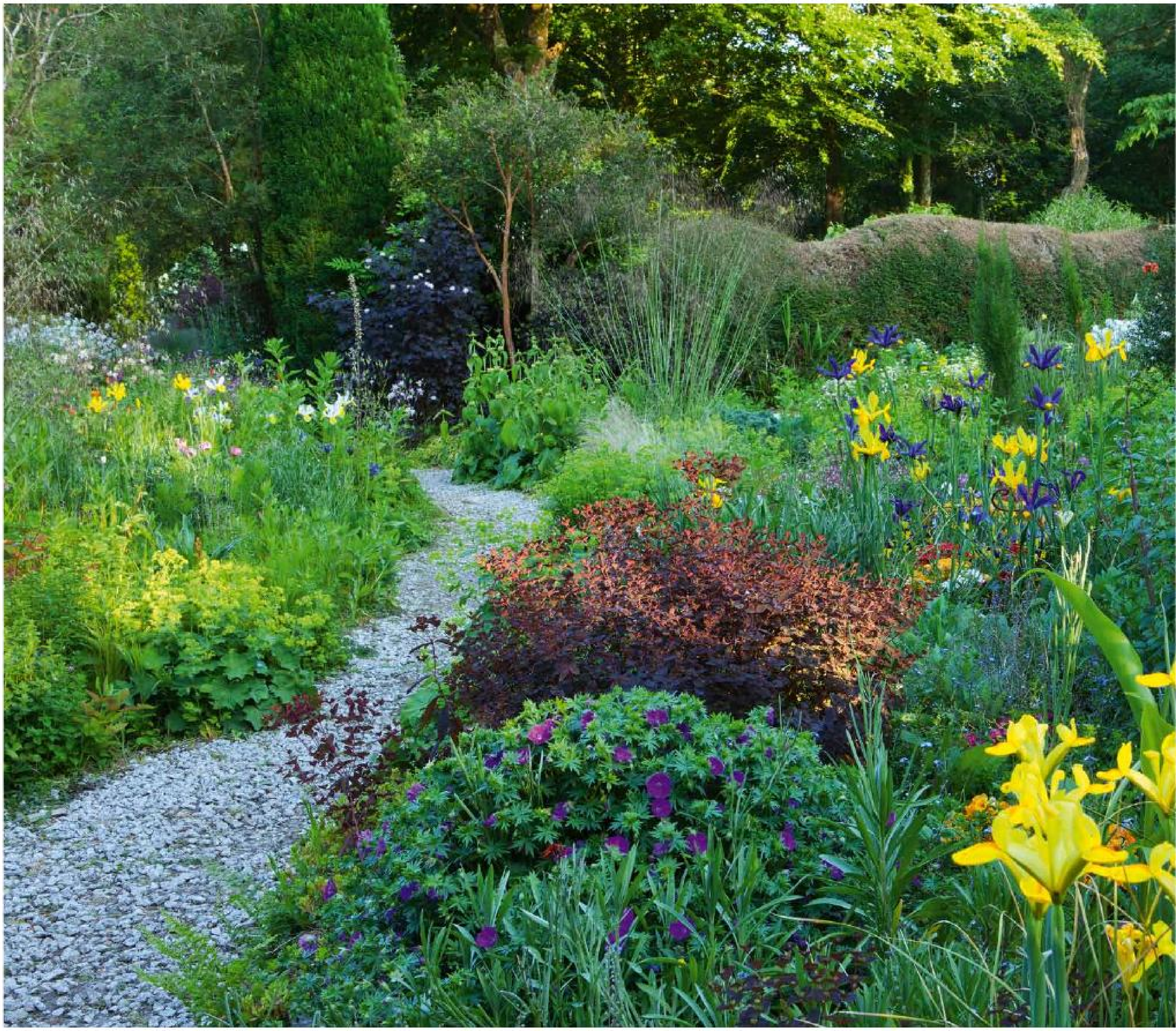
Artists' garden

Pinsla's owners have combined masterful planting schemes with the sensibilities of true artists

WORDS TOM PETHERICK PHOTOGRAPHS MARIANNE MAJERUS

Below The gravel path ushers you gently towards the wood, past *Geranium sanguineum* 'Max Frei' and the purple leaves of *Euphorbia amygdaloides* 'Purpurea'.

Right A rusted chain decorates the rockery wall, offsetting the flowers of the London Pride (*Saxifraga* x *urbium*) which hugs the edge of the pathway.



In brief

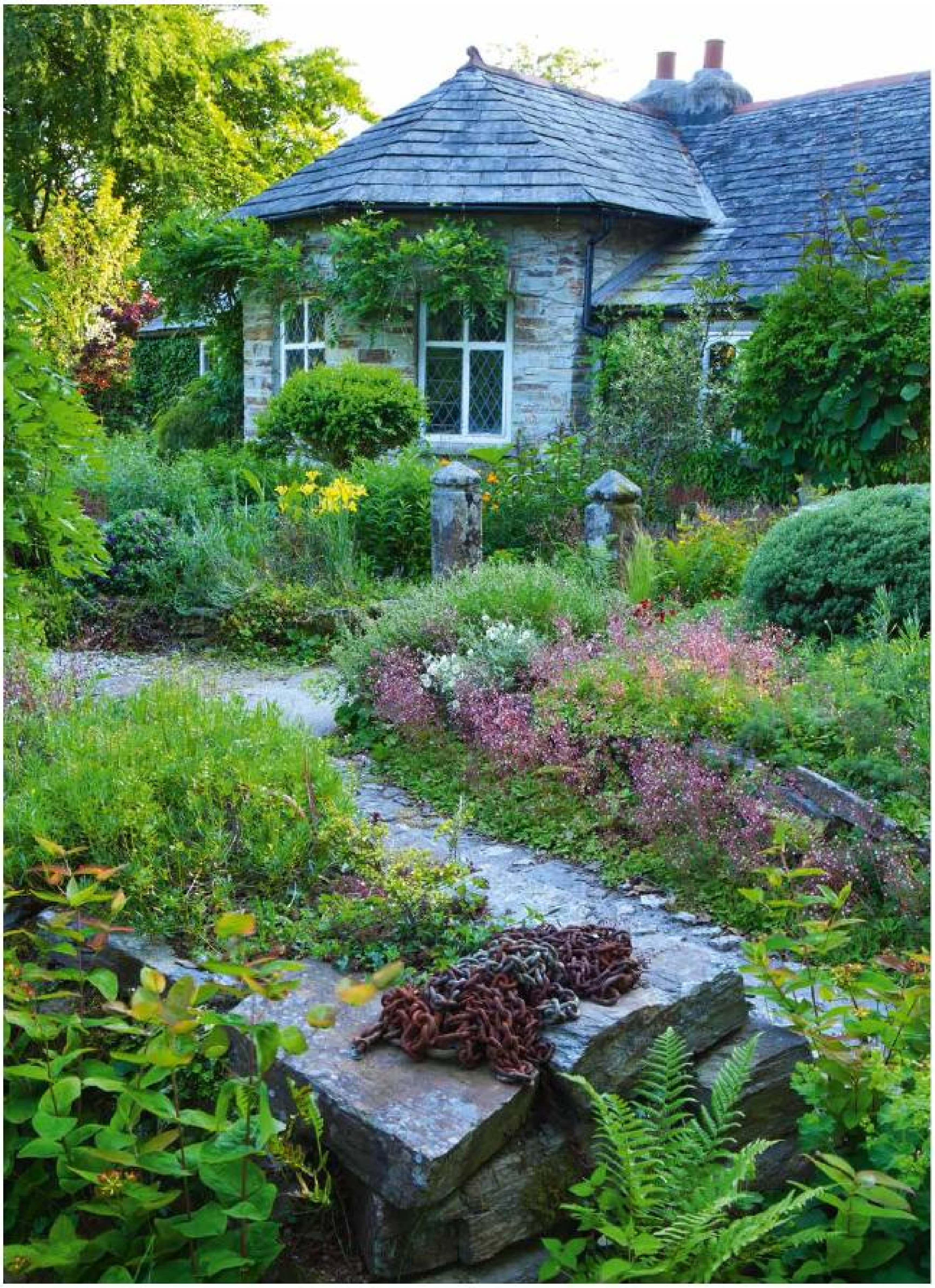
Name Pinsla.
What Artists' garden and nursery set in tranquil woodland. Naturalistic planting surrounding 18th-century cottage.
Where Near Bodmin, Cornwall.
Size 2 acres.
Climate Wet, high rainfall, sheltered from north and east.
Soil Acid loam over shale with underlying clay. Typical Cornish soil.
Points of interest Annuals and tender bedding to create meadow planting, integration of sculpture and decorative paths. Herbaceous perennials and ferns. Nursery with sculpture for sale.

It takes passion, skill, hard work and a good dollop of know-how to survive by opening your garden to the public these days, and Mark and Claire Woodbine at Pinsla have all of the above.

It can be tough going, especially if the weather and seasonality are against you – Cornwall empties between October and Easter – but Pinsla is special. Some places just have it, and it is this little bit of magic in combination with being good gardeners that gets them through.

Tucked away just off the Glynn Valley between Dobwalls and Bodmin, Pinsla has the kind of charm that illuminates many Cornish gardens, both large and small. The lodge house where the couple live, festooned in a mass of wisteria and honeysuckle, has barely changed since it was built in 1768; the beech trees above it, flattened tops a legacy of the west wind, instantly mark the site of this garden as one of ancient importance. This is something to which Mark and Claire attach great significance.

Over 30 years they have let the garden merge with the edge of the woodland rather than trying to dominate the landscape. They have made a garden, certainly, yet it has evolved in a natural way and it is impossible to detect that it has undergone many changes and styles during its history. ▷



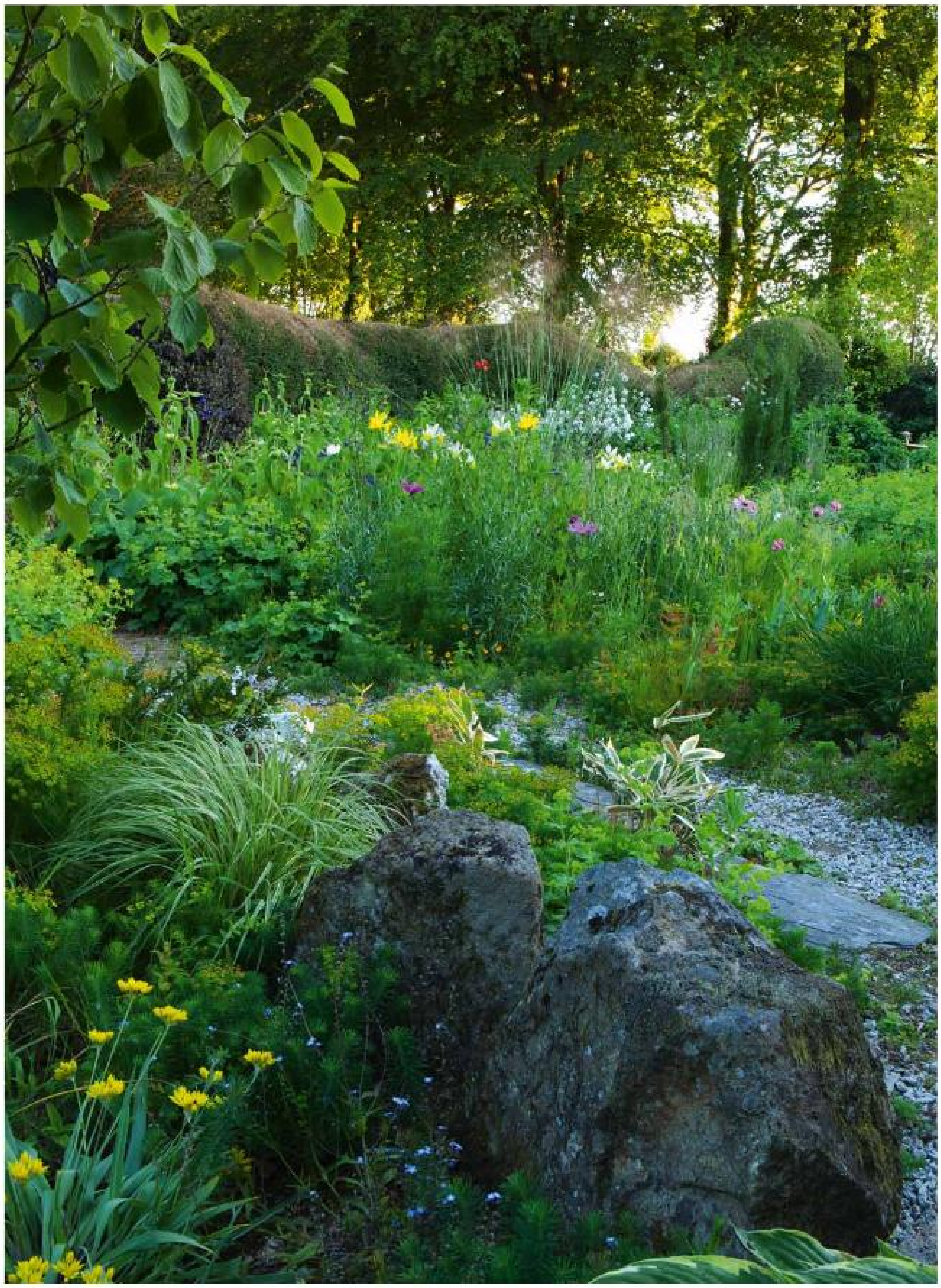
▷ Its current incarnation is one of a mass of plants: herbaceous perennials topped up with annuals hang off an underlying structure of carefully selected shrubs and trees with the surrounding woodland as a haunting background presence. And then there is the sculpture, for this is a big part of the garden. It is amusing and it works and as Mark says, you need to be a plumber to appreciate it. The hand of an artist who knows his garden has transformed twisted bits of recycled metal, indistinguishable from their former purpose, into works of art.

What makes the sculpture work is that different pieces have been incorporated as part of the garden rather than as an adjunct to it. There is a circle of standing stones, spirals of ancient terracotta pots and repurposed items "that should never be thrown away" as Claire says. This is the ethos that makes the garden attractive and heartwarming. It has all come from within.

As a plantswoman, Claire is both skilled and bold. Every nook and cranny is filled with plants that seem to have arrived naturally rather than having been placed – the hallmark of a visionary. Tiny saxifrages cling to low walls or path edges, striking perennials such as *Geranium* x *oxonianum* 'Rose Clair', *Potentilla thurberi* 'Monarch's Velvet' and *Geranium sanguineum* 'Max Frei'

Below, left The bright yellow flowers of *Allium moly* and low-growing *Euphorbia cyparissias* nestle close to the rocks.

Below, right The stone circle surrounds wild meadow grasses backed by an undulating hedge of *Lonicera nitida*.



Every nook and cranny is filled with plants that seem to have arrived naturally rather than having been placed

abound, while annuals including candytuft, lobelia and poppies have liberally self-seeded themselves around. Where a gap appears it is immediately filled. Bedding is an important feature of this garden and is used to extend the flowering season, but only in pockets, not as focal points.

The plants and shrubs that befit a Cornish woodland garden hold the structure beautifully. The incredibly floriferous *Rhododendron racemosum* is such a good choice in a garden where the light is occluded. The evergreen *Drimys winteri* (winter's bark) is there too, along with *Acacia pravissima* and another staple of proper gardens in this part of the world, *Rhododendron* Russellianum Group.

The understory of the woodland and its edge is also carefully planted. Polemoniums, epimediums and hostas all have roles to play along with other herbaceous perennials that can manage in the filtered sunlight, such as inula, lysimachia, *Verbena hastata* and *Ligularia* 'The Rocket'. While the soil is by nature acid, there are few plants that are off-limits when so much natural organic matter is present. ▷

▷ At the centre of the garden is the tearoom, the shop and the nursery, where many of the plants for sale have been propagated either from seed, cutting or division from Pinsla stock. This is a gardener's garden, from which a visitor is very likely to be able to take home a plant that they have just seen growing well in a beautiful setting. I certainly did, enriched by a visit to a garden where the love of plants, nature and the home patch comes above all else. ◻

USEFUL INFORMATION

Address Pinsla Garden and Nursery, Glynn, nr Cardinham,
Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4AY.
Tel 01208 821339.
Website www.pinslagarden.net
Opening 23 February – 31 October, daily 9.30am-5pm. Adults £3, children free.
Dogs on leads welcome.

Below, left *Alchemilla mollis* and oriental poppies alongside the river pebble and slate path.

Centre Aquilegias, candytuft (*Iberis gibraltarica*) and lupins under the peeling bark of a eucalyptus.

Below, right Garden art adds an extra touch of creativity to Pinsla's gardens.

This is a gardener's garden... where the love of plants, nature and the home patch comes above all else

Mark and Claire's advice on garden art

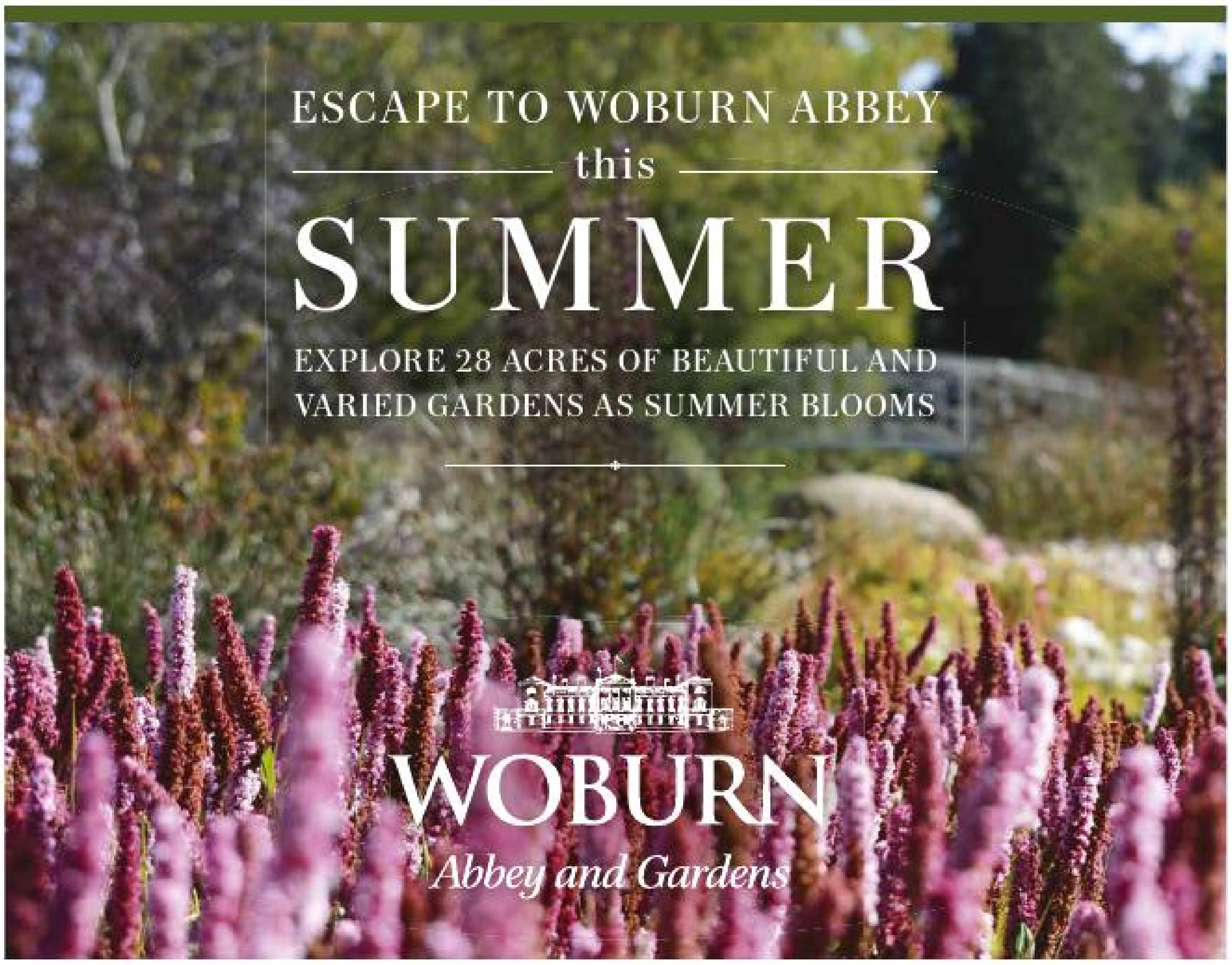
Consider using garden art with built-in obsolescence. Mosses, insects and fungi are encouraged by natural materials, and while a piece may decay or have to come down in time, it looks great while it lasts, so it doesn't matter.

Be brave – after all, it's your garden. Release your inner child and be creative.

Garden art must enhance the beauty of the garden. Art can be about social comment so from that point it's tough to have hard-edged art in the garden. It can work but it must add to the ambience of the garden, whatever that is.

Consider having an art party with your friends. That was how Pinsla's stone circle was built.

Bamboo, rhododendron and x *Cuprocyparis leylandii* are good for sculpting and stand the test of time. Leyland cypress up can last up to 12 years, even at only finger thickness.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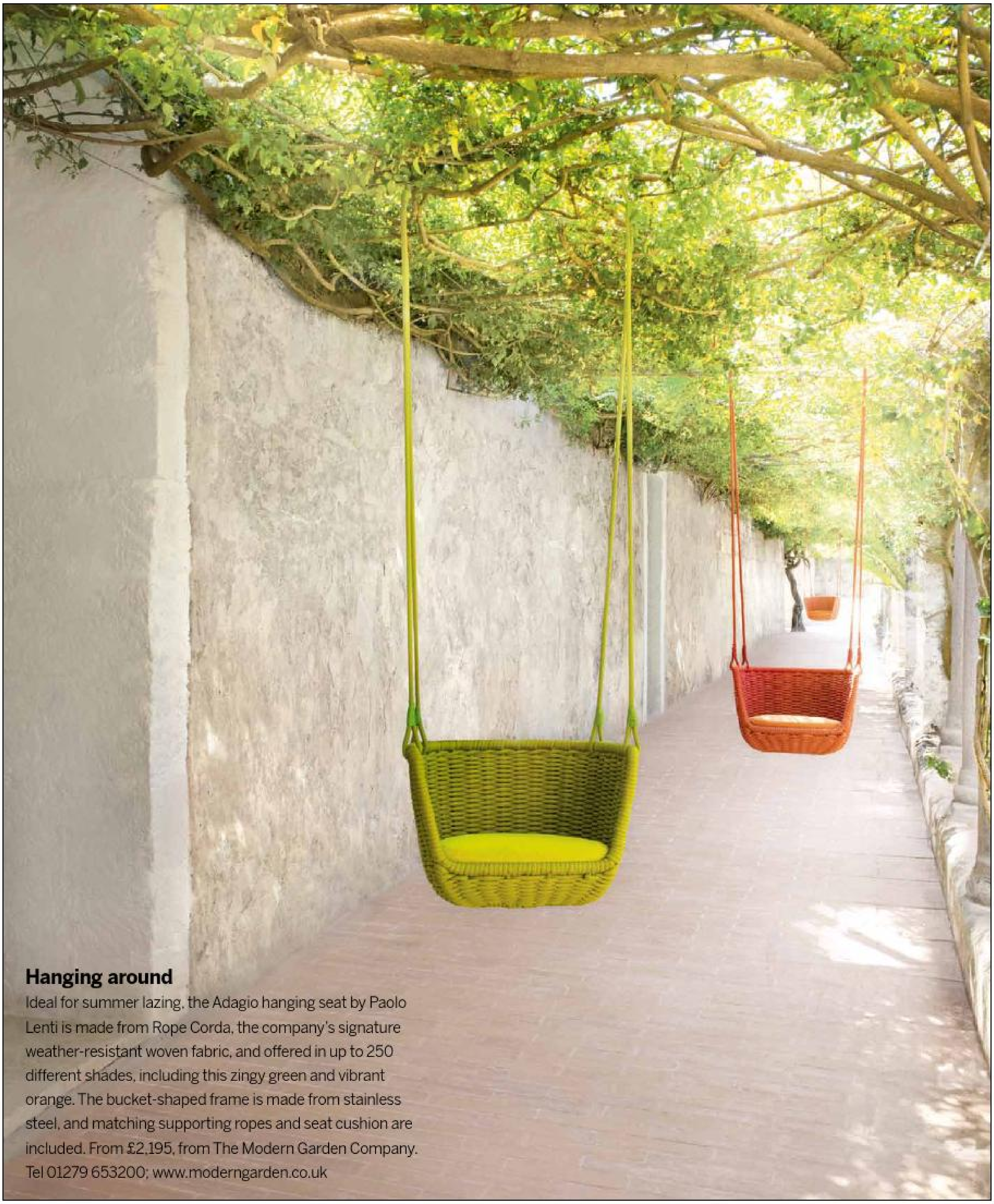

Hanging around

Ideal for summer lazing, the Adagio hanging seat by Paolo Lenti is made from Rope Corda, the company's signature weather-resistant woven fabric, and offered in up to 250 different shades, including this zingy green and vibrant orange. The bucket-shaped frame is made from stainless steel, and matching supporting ropes and seat cushion are included. From £2,195, from The Modern Garden Company. Tel 01279 653200; www.moderngarden.co.uk

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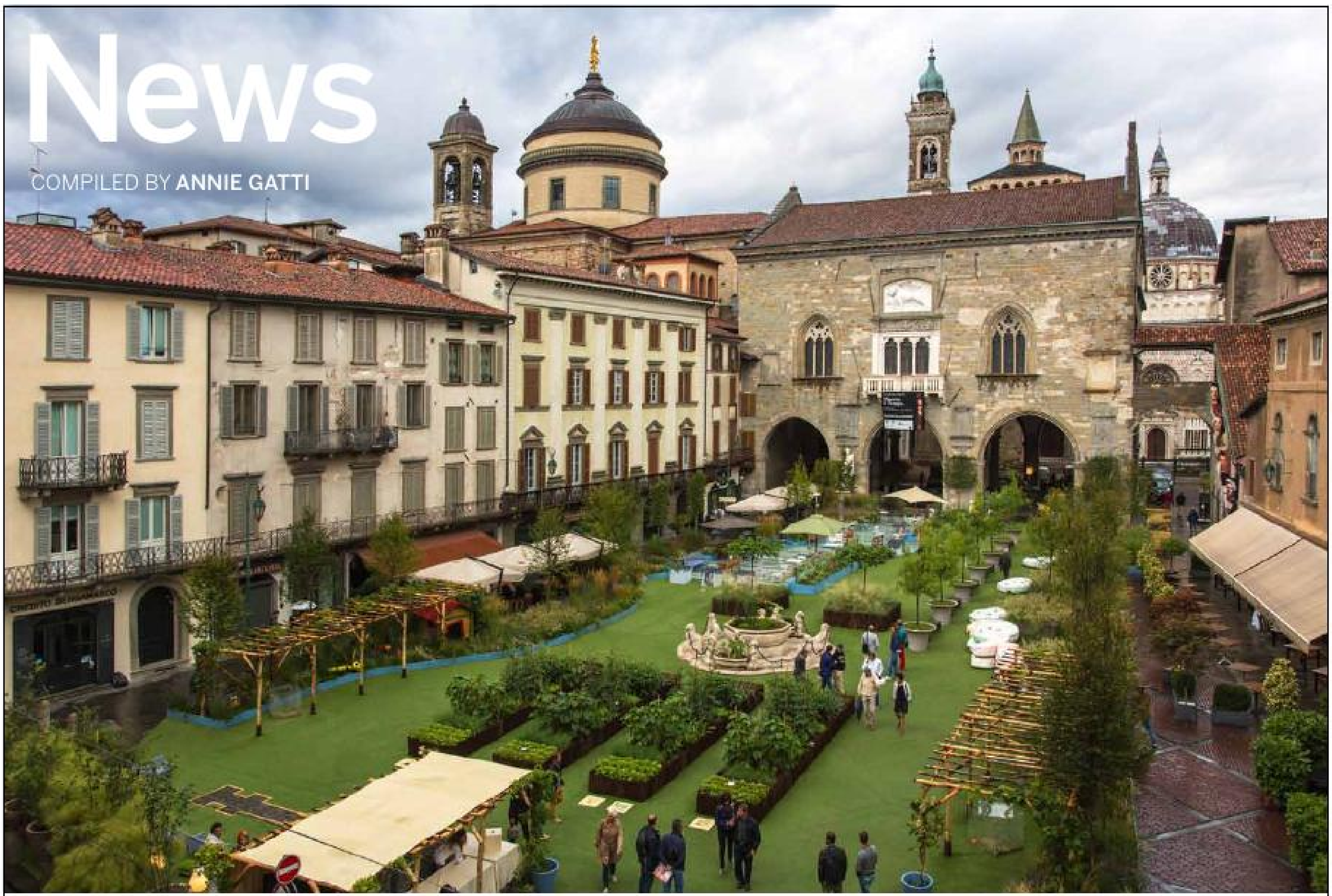
News

COMPILED BY **ANNIE GATTI**



FESTIVAL

International landscapes

Piazza Vecchia in Bergamo, northern Italy, will once again be decked in greenery for 16 days in September for the 2013 edition of the International Meeting of the Landscape and Garden. Highlights of this year include the GARDENS ILLUSTRATED seminar, 'Exploring the Use of Perennials and Grasses in British Gardens', by Annie Guilfoyle in collaboration with Vivaio Valfredda nursery on 12 September, and workshops by John Brookes, Clive Nichols and Arend Jan van der Horst. 7-22 September. Book at www.arketipos.org

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TOP TABLES

Slate-topped garden tables on green-oak bases, handcrafted in Devon using Brazilian riven slate and French oak, are offered in three styles. Ottery is round (1.5m in diameter, 76.2cm high; £995); Colyton (below) is rectangular (2.2m x 1.2m, 78cm high; £1,495); Axminster (below right) has a cross frame (1.8m x 90cm, 76.2cm high; £1,295). Bespoke versions also available.

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COMPETITION

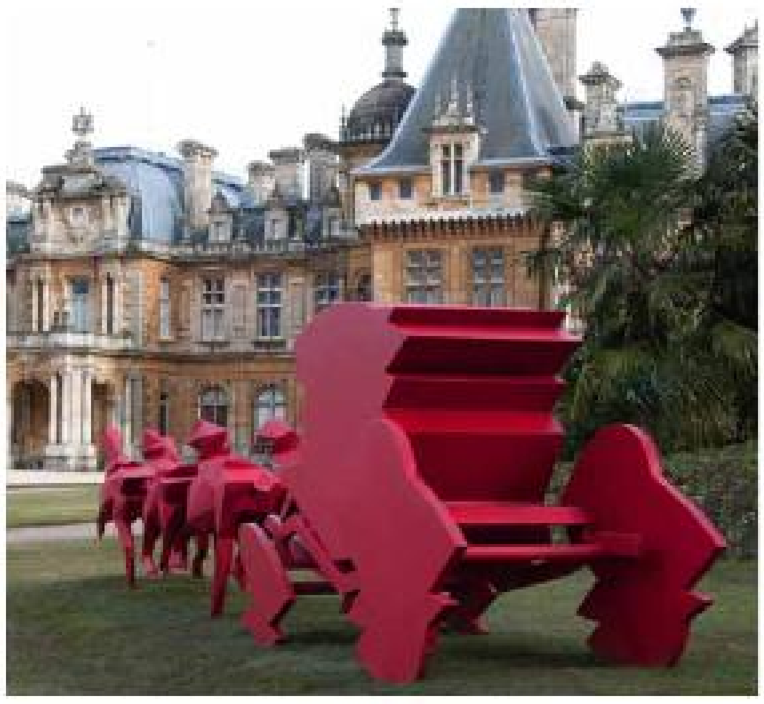
Proud heritage

A new Heritage Garden is planned for Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons in Oxfordshire. Members of the Society of Garden Designers can enter a competition to design, plan and build the new garden (deadline 28 June). Gardeners can win an apprenticeship at the eco-friendly gardens, working with the designer on the new plot and with Le Manoir's head gardener Anne-Marie Owens (deadline 22 June). For Design Competition, call 01989 566695 or email info@sgd.org.uk; for Scholarship Programme email garden.scholar@blanc.co.uk

GARDEN FEATURES

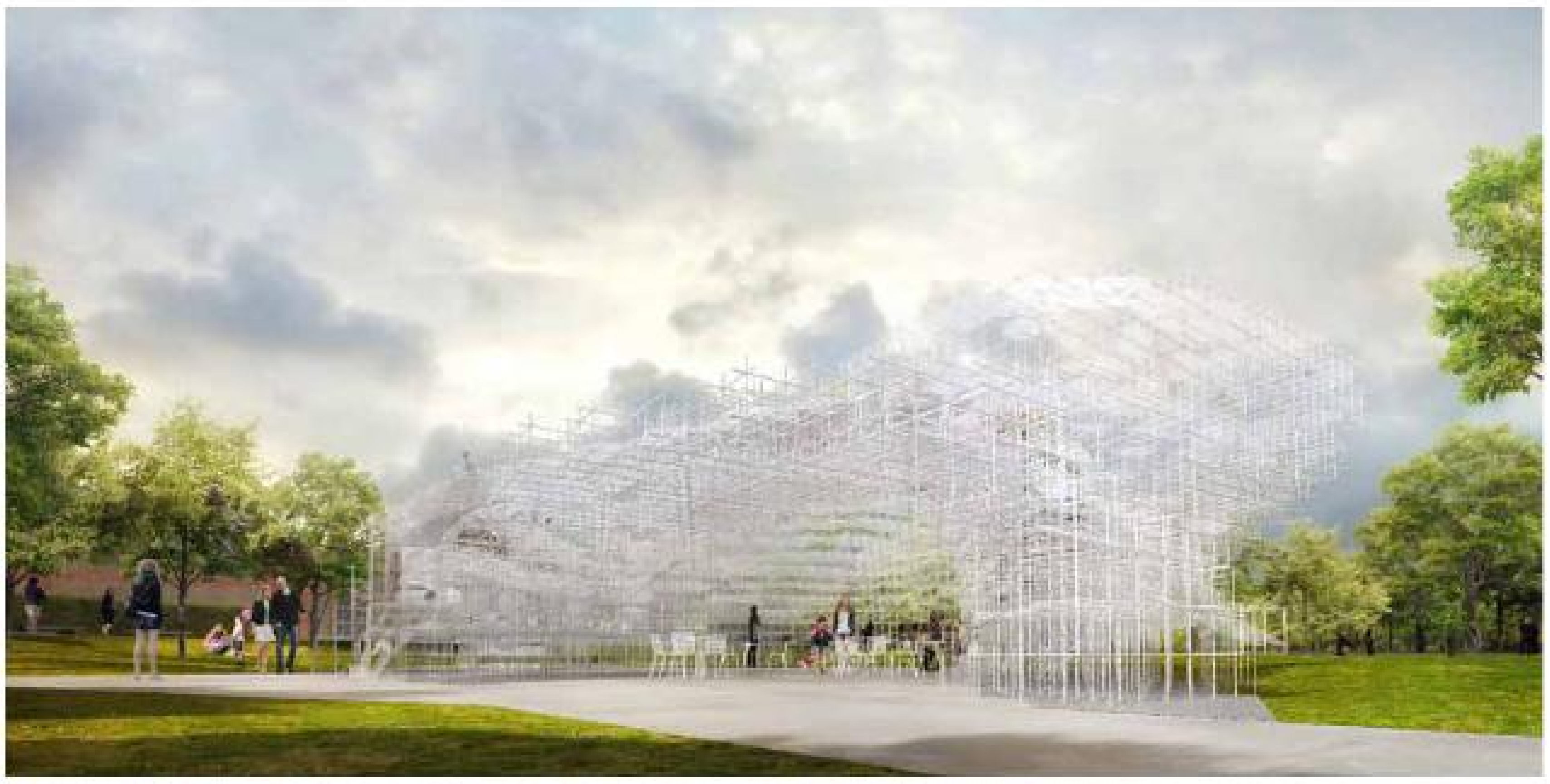
Glasshouse range

A flexible arrangement of interlinked glasshouse, glazed canopy and pergola from Hartley Botanic creates an elegant garden feature, and shelter for people and plants, that draws on classical buildings for inspiration. The new Prince's Foundation Glasshouse Range, unveiled at the Chelsea Flower Show, is a collaboration between the glasshouse makers and the Prince's Foundation for Building Community. The aluminium canopy and pergola, supported on Corinthian columns, can be added to any existing Hartley Botanic glasshouse. Price depends on size and combinations. For details call 01457 819155; www.hartley-botanic.co.uk/princes-foundation



SCULPTURE

Le Carrosse, a welded steel sculpture inspired by a 17th-century coach and horses by French sculptor Xavier Veilhan is a new acquisition by the Rothschild Foundation for Waddesdon Manor in Bucks. Painted red, the three pairs of horses gallop across the lawns on the north front.



ARCHITECTURE

Kensington design

Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto, co-winner of the Golden Lion for National Participation award at the Venice Architectural Biennale in 2012, has designed this year's Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, a latticed structure made from steel poles that covers 350 square metres of lawn in Kensington Gardens. Stepped terraces will provide seating within this semi-transparent pavilion, in place from 8 June to 20 October.

Notebook

- **South Korea's first garden festival,** held at Suncheon Bay where Charles Jencks has designed a lake garden, features UK designers Andy Sturgeon, Sally Court and Andrew Wilson as well as designers from France, Holland, Japan, Germany, Spain, Italy, Turkey and the USA. Until 20 October. www.2013expo.or.kr
- **Book now for a 10-week course** in the history of gardens from the 16th century to the present day, at the Institute of Historical Research, University of London's School of Advance Study. Thursdays 11am-1pm, 3 October to 5 December. www.history.ac.uk/research-training/courses/garden-history
- **Fresh Air 2013,** the biennale sculpture exhibition at the 5-acre riverside garden at Quenington Old Rectory, Cirencester, takes place from 16 June to 7 July and includes work by 31 new exhibitors. Plant-inspired pieces include 'Plantain II' by Colin Hawkins and 'Thorn Tree' by Natalia Dias. 10am-5pm, £2.50 (children free); www.freshair2013.com
- **An exhibition of letters, notebooks and photographs** offers a fascinating insight into the passions and talents of Gertrude Jekyll, who was a composer and suffragette as well as a garden maker. Book for a talk on 8 June on restoring Jekyll Gardens by architect Michael Edwards. Exhibition continues until 8 September at The Lightbox, Woking, Surrey, entrance free. www.thelightbox.org.uk

MIKE FEAR ©THE NATIONAL TRUST, WADDESDON MANOR, SERPENTINE GALLERY PAVILION 2013 DESIGNED BY SOU FUJIMOTO EXTERIOR INDICATIVE CGI© STUDIO CYRILLE THOMAS FOR SOU FUJIMOTO ARCHITECTS

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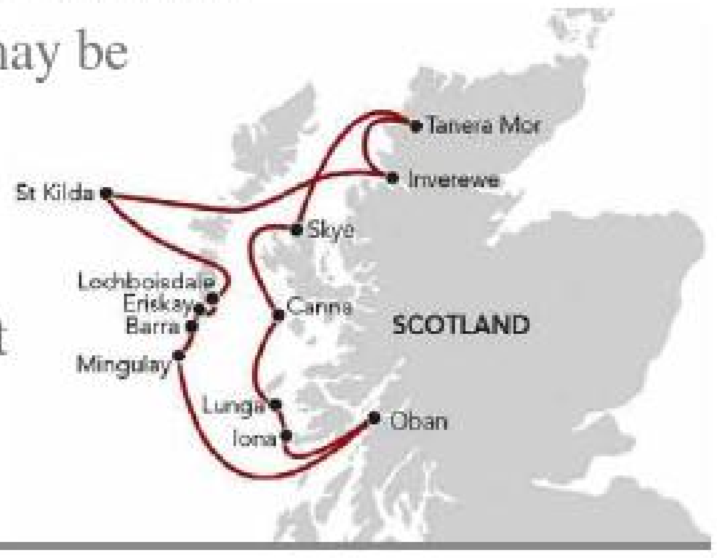

One of Europe's true last remaining wilderness areas affords the traveller a marvellous island hopping journey through stunning scenery accompanied by spectacular sunsets and prolific wildlife. With our naturalists and local guides we will explore the length and breadth of the isles, and with our nimble Zodiac craft be able to reach some of the most remote and untouched places.

The Itinerary

Day 1 - Oban. Embark the MS Serenissima in the afternoon.

Day 2 - Iona & Lunga. For more than 1000 years, the island of Iona has been a place of deep spiritual significance. We will spend the morning here, returning to the vessel for lunch. This afternoon we will take to the Zodiacs to explore the tiny Treshnish Islands, located in the waters between Mull and Tiree. This group of low lying islands is home to thousands of sea birds and a large population of common and Atlantic grey seals. Hopefully, land on the largest of the islands, Lunga to walk amongst the amazingly tame puffins and see the remnants of past habitation that dates back to Viking times.

Day 3 - Canna & Skye. Today, we will arrive at the Small Islands. Spend the morning on Canna which has a tiny agricultural and cattle-rearing population. From a walk along the cliff top we may see golden eagles, white-tailed eagles and peregrine falcons. At the cliff edge the rare loose-flowered orchids grow. Sail during lunch to Skye and the majestic Loch Scavaig and the Cuillins mountains. These magnificent mountains form a dramatic backdrop to the freshwater loch which we will explore by foot.

Day 4 - Summer Isles & Inverewe. Arrive this morning in the beautiful Summer Isles, and the island of Tanera Mor. On a guided walk enjoy the stunning views, look out for otters and seals and the prolific bird life. During lunch sail south to Gairloch for our visit to the imposing gardens of Inverewe, surely one of the finest sited gardens in all Scotland. Here, exotic and tender plants thrive in their northerly location warmed by the Gulf Stream.

Day 5 - St Kilda. Arrive at first light in St Kilda, a remarkable uninhabited archipelago some fifty miles beyond the Outer Hebrides. The largest island, Hirta, once supported a population of over 200, but the last islanders left in the 1930s. The Medieval village has been restored by the National Trust for Scotland and offers a marvellous link with the past. The islands are an important breeding ground for many seabirds including Atlantic puffins and northern fulmars. Later, cruise past two of the largest gannetries in the world at Stac Lee and Berneray.

Day 6 - Lochboisdale & Eriskay. Spend the morning exploring this little visited Gaelic speaking region which offers marvellous walks and picturesque beaches. Enjoy an afternoon stroll on this picturesque island and see the place where Bonnie Prince Charlie first landed on Scottish soil in 1745.

Day 7 - Mingulay, Pabbay & Barra. Today we explore the remote islands at the tip of South Uist, which are all uninhabited. We will use the Zodiacs to explore and hope to make some beach landings. The islands have some significant historical sites such as the old village of Mingulay. The islands are also a nature reserve with important breeding populations of razorbills, guillemots, black guillemots, puffins, fulmars and shags.

Day 8 - Oban. Disembark this morning.

MS Serenissima

Previously known as the MS Andrea, the MS Serenissima was launched after an extensive refurbishment in April 2013. The vessel accommodates just 107 passengers in attractively designed cabins which feature air conditioning, modern shower and toilet, telephone, flat screen televisions and other thoughtful appointments. Onboard facilities include a Lido area with a bar and Jacuzzi, two lounges, a small library with two computers for internet access, a spacious observation deck, fitness area and massage. The free seating Venice Restaurant accommodates all guests in one sitting. In addition there is an outside dining area for when the weather and itinerary permit.

Prices and Inclusions

Prices per person based on double occupancy range from £2095 for an inside cabin to £4295 for an Owners Suite. Cabins for sole use start from £2395.

Price Includes: Seven nights aboard MS Serenissima on full board basis with house wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, expedition team, shore excursions, gratuities to crew, transfers, port taxes.

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NOBLE CALEDONIA

Be inspired!

Achieving a great garden requires inspiration as well as perspiration, but how do you come up with ideas to suit your space? Fortunately there are places to go that can help achieve that lightbulb moment

WORDS ANNIE GUILFOYLE

Annie Guilfoyle is Director of Garden Design at KLC School of Design. She is also Garden Course Coordinator at West Dean College and runs her own garden design studio. "My clients and their gardens are very diverse. Ranging from tiny urban courtyards to large rural estates, they offer a wide variety of challenges. There is something to learn and discover on every project."

Once you have assessed the horticultural aspects of your garden, it is time to think about developing the design. Some may find the creative part daunting, so what can you do to help with the process of choosing the style and layout of your garden?

Growing up on Exmoor definitely played a large part in my becoming a garden designer, as the natural landscape has always been my main source of inspiration. Closely followed by art and architecture; Paul Klee's extraordinary use of colour and Ben Nicholson's abstract reliefs never fail to fuel ideas. The innovative work of architects such as Carlo Scarpa and the award-winning Peter Zumthor are both closely linked to the landscape and for me are so inspiring.

So, my advice is to feed the mind with images, ideas and experiences. Begin by collecting pictures of things that appeal to you. Not just garden images, but textiles, furniture, fashion and interiors. This will help you to decide which shapes, colours and materials you like. Edit the images by selecting the ones that really speak to you. Group these together to create a mood board; this should provide you with a good foundation for the concept or style of the garden.

From here you can start to refine your ideas and develop the layout. Sketching over photographs is another really helpful way of exploring design options. Simply place tracing paper over an enlarged image of your garden and draw in features that you would like to incorporate. Be bold and draw several versions until you find an idea that you like.

Books, magazines and the Internet are a great way of sourcing images and information. Pinterest is an online tool that allows you to create a 'virtual scrapbook'. It is a very efficient way of sourcing specific items and garden styles. However, visiting gardens is the best way to do your research. The National Gardens Scheme is an organisation through which people open their gardens, raising money for charity, better known as *The Yellow Book* scheme. Ensure that you visit gardens that are similar in size and location to your own. Make notes and take photographs, recording all aspects of the garden that appeal, and chat with the owners about how they achieved the design.

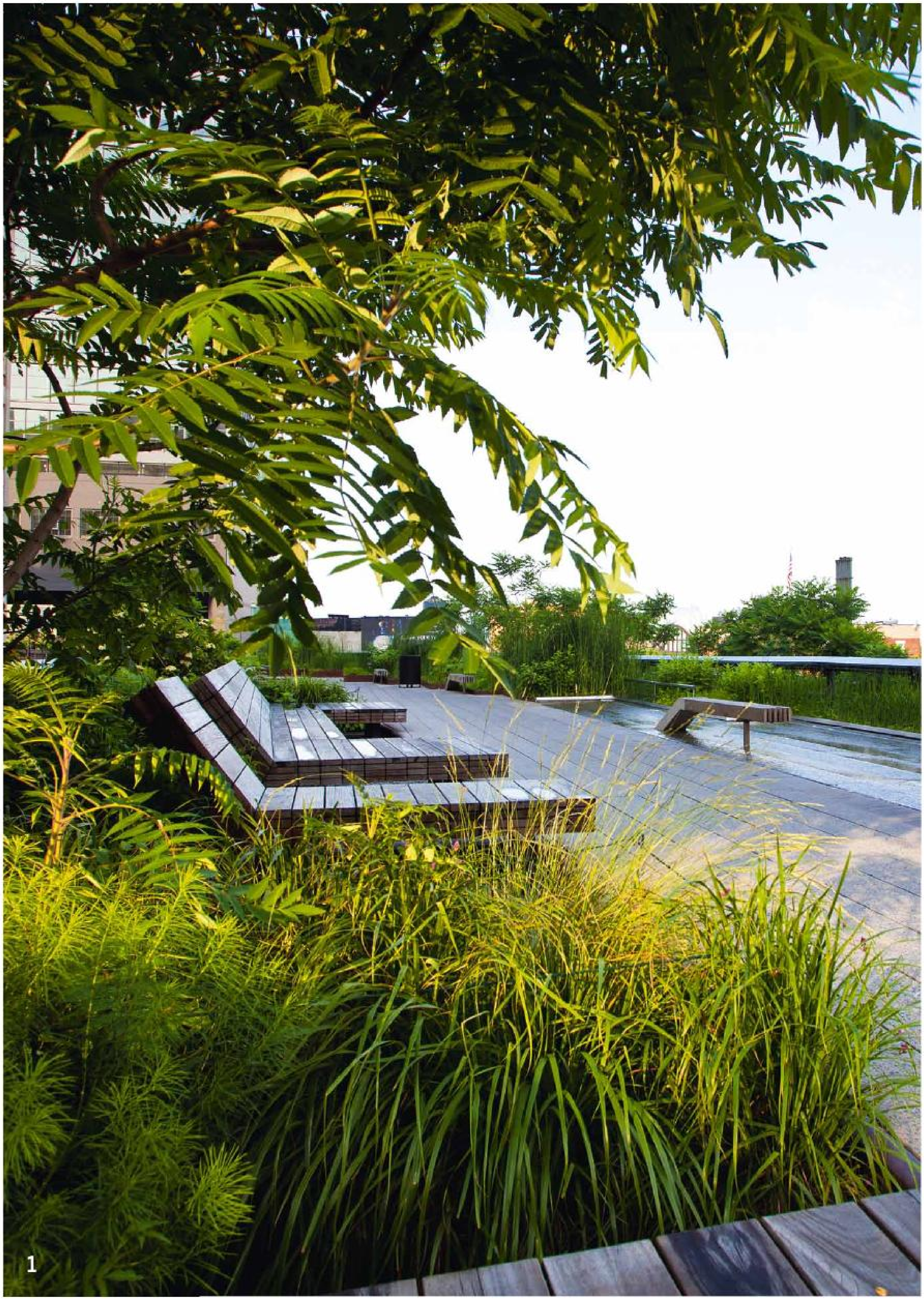
Show sources

RHS flower shows such as Chelsea and Hampton Court Palace are great places to discover landscape materials, plants, furniture, containers and more. The show gardens can provide inspiration for the design and layout. If you don't necessarily like the overall design there might be elements such as paving, water features or walling that appeal. Most gardens will hand out leaflets listing all their suppliers, which is helpful for sourcing plants and products. ☐

NEXT MONTH Linking house and garden

1 Park visits

The most visited public park in Manhattan is the High Line. Making the time to visit parks and gardens will really help to fuel ideas. You can discover innovative design, planting, hard landscaping materials and even furniture.



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CLAIRE TAKACS

2 Innovative ideas

Garden shows are always jam-packed with interesting ideas. Anoushka Feiler's Gold Medal-winning garden at Hampton Court Palace Flower Show last year also won Best in Show. These Portland stone steps included an inlay strip of coloured concrete, printed with words that related to the garden's theme.

3 Planting combinations

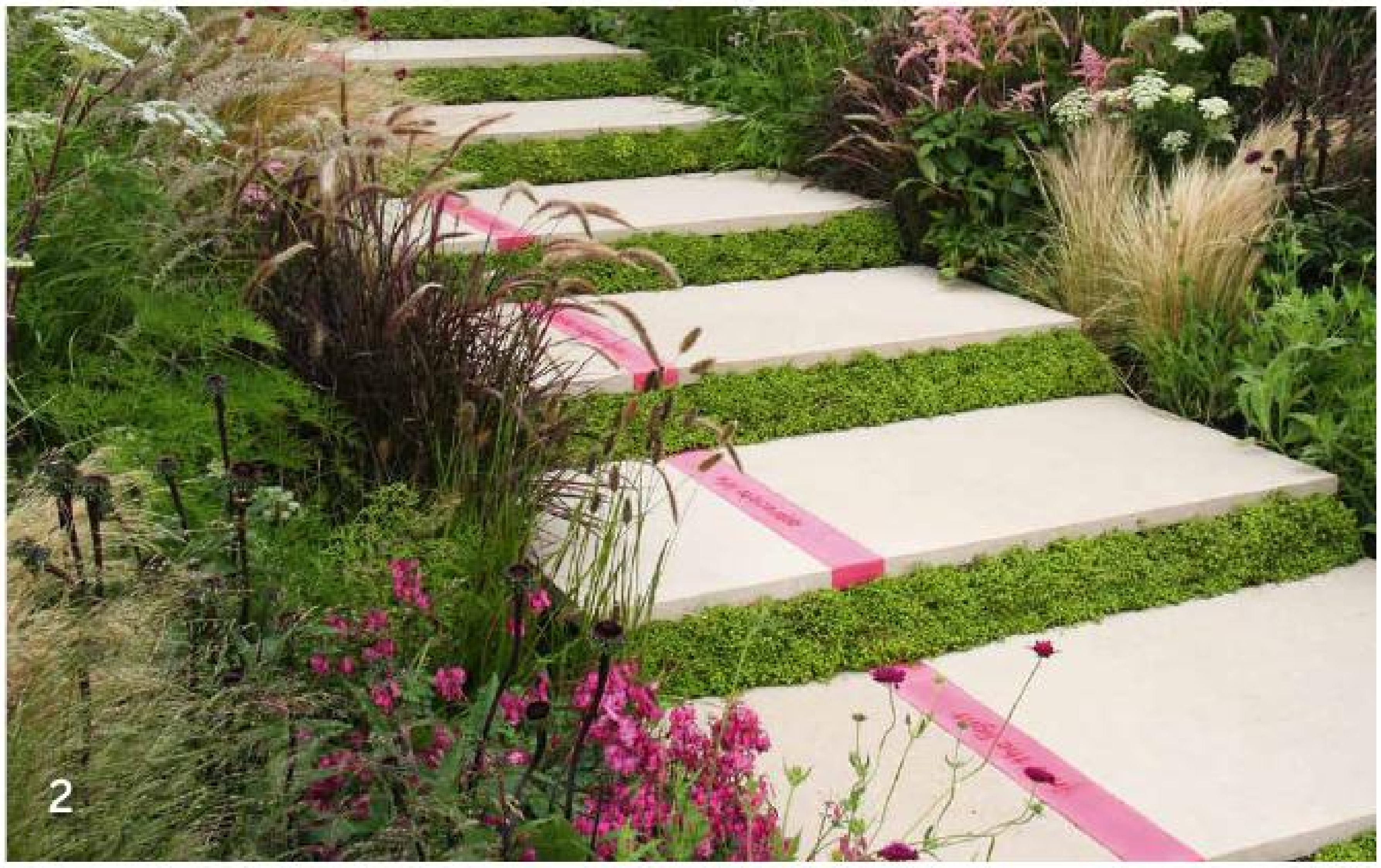
Matthew Childs' poignant design 'Light at the end of the Tunnel' won best conceptual garden last year at Hampton Court Palace Flower Show. The inspiration for this section of planting was the 'colour of the clouds', with *Gaura lindheimeri* 'Chiffon', *Salvia nemorosa* 'Caradonna' and *Gypsophila paniculata* 'Bristol Fairy'.

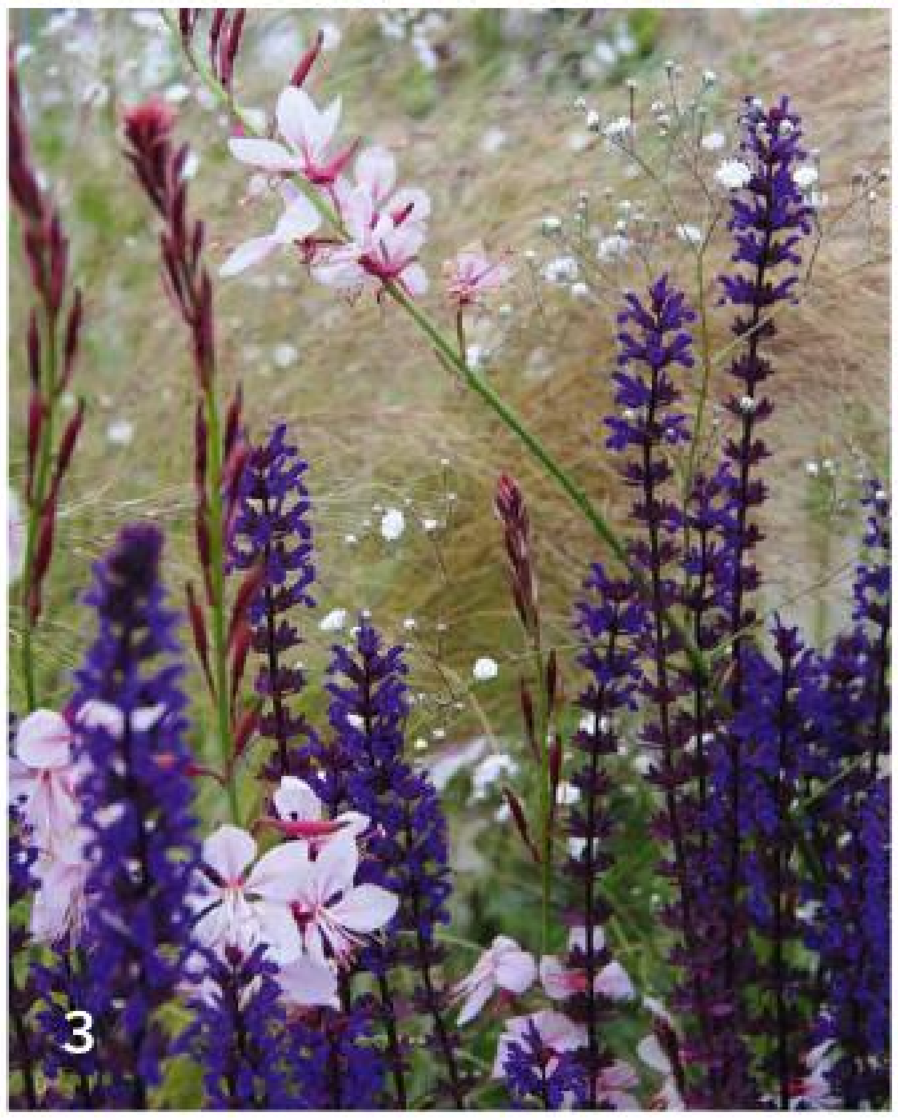
4 Materials choice

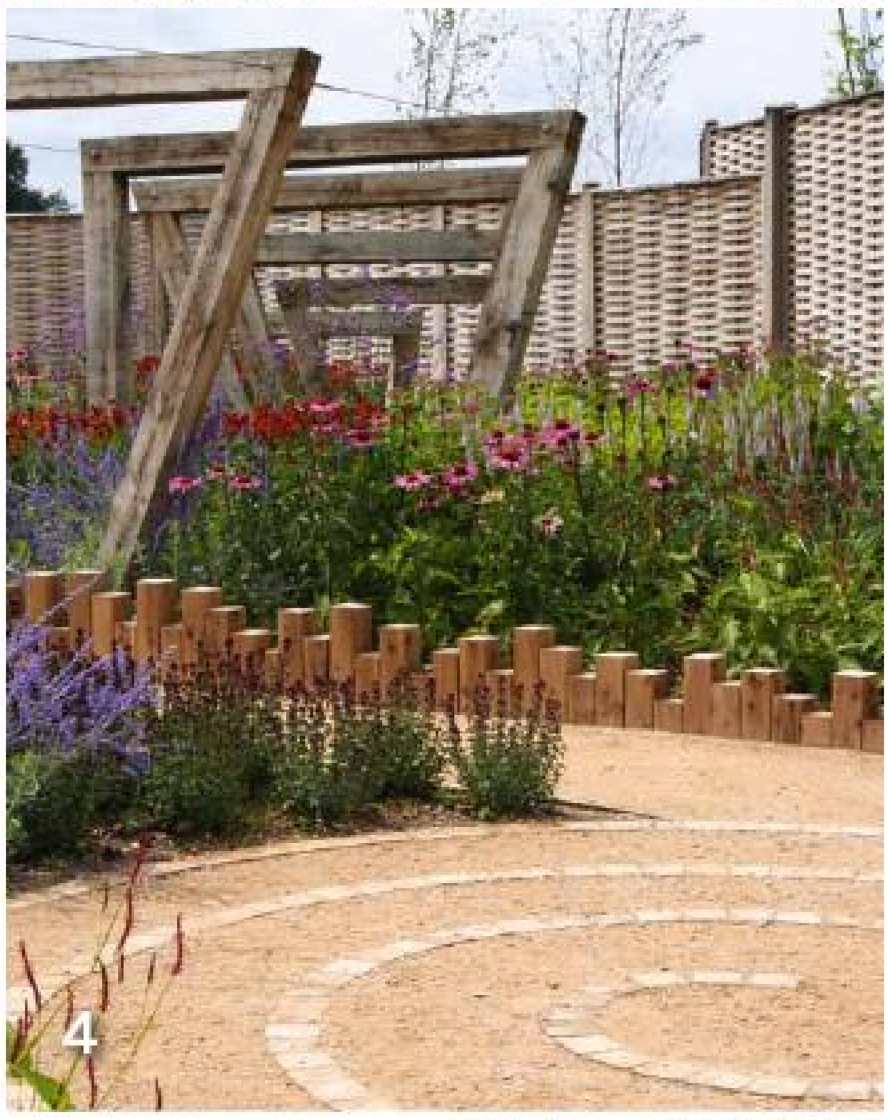
This inspirational show garden designed by Paul Dracott demonstrates how wonderfully versatile wood can be. Paul has used it to create surface detail that forms a central spiral, as well as the irregular edging for beds and an unusual linear structure that gave the garden it's name – 'Exoskeleton'.

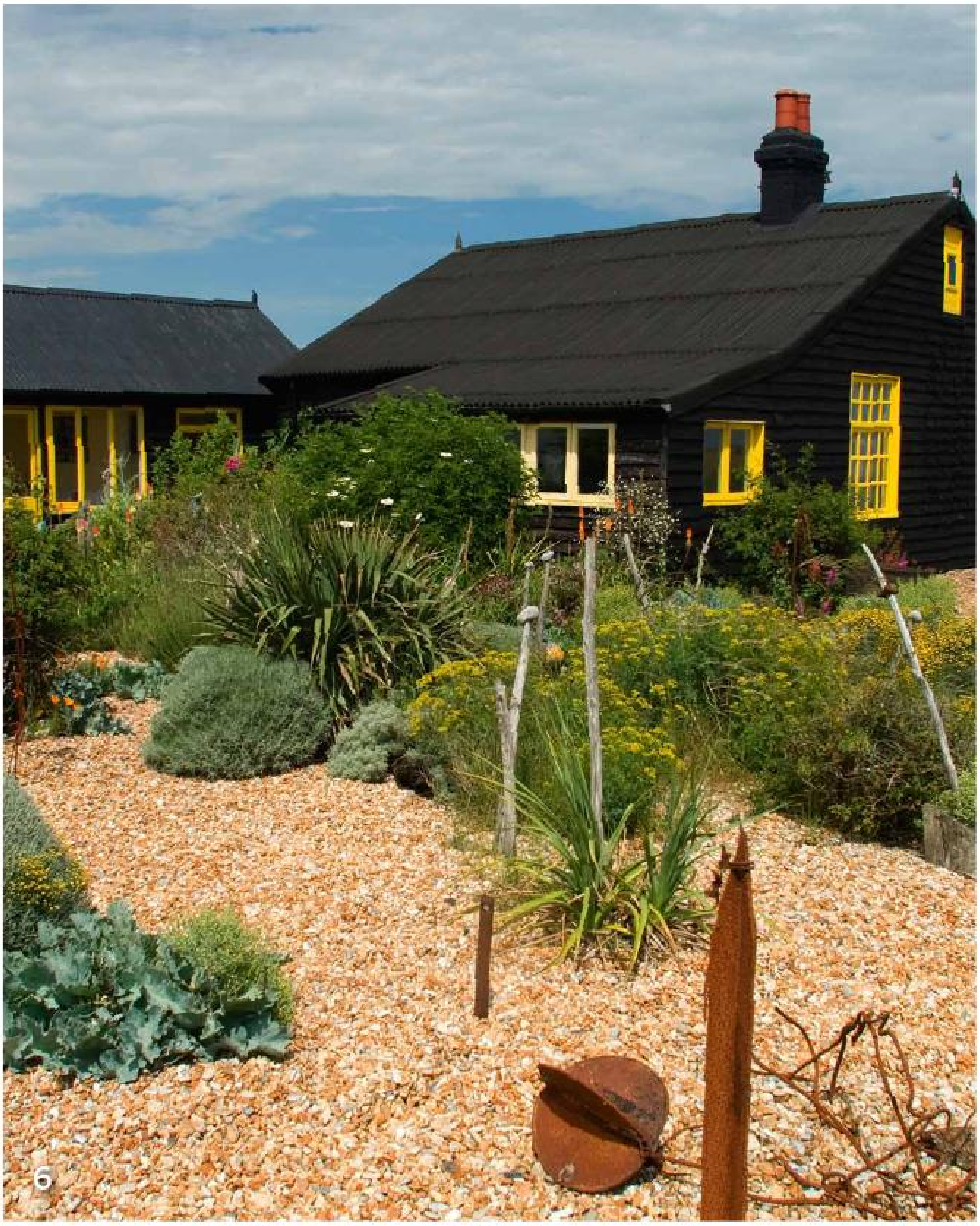
5 The bigger picture

Exmoor in Somerset was where I spent my childhood; the beauty and wildness of the landscape left a lasting impression upon me. As you begin to formulate ideas for your own garden, consider the places that are special to you and try to capture that feeling.









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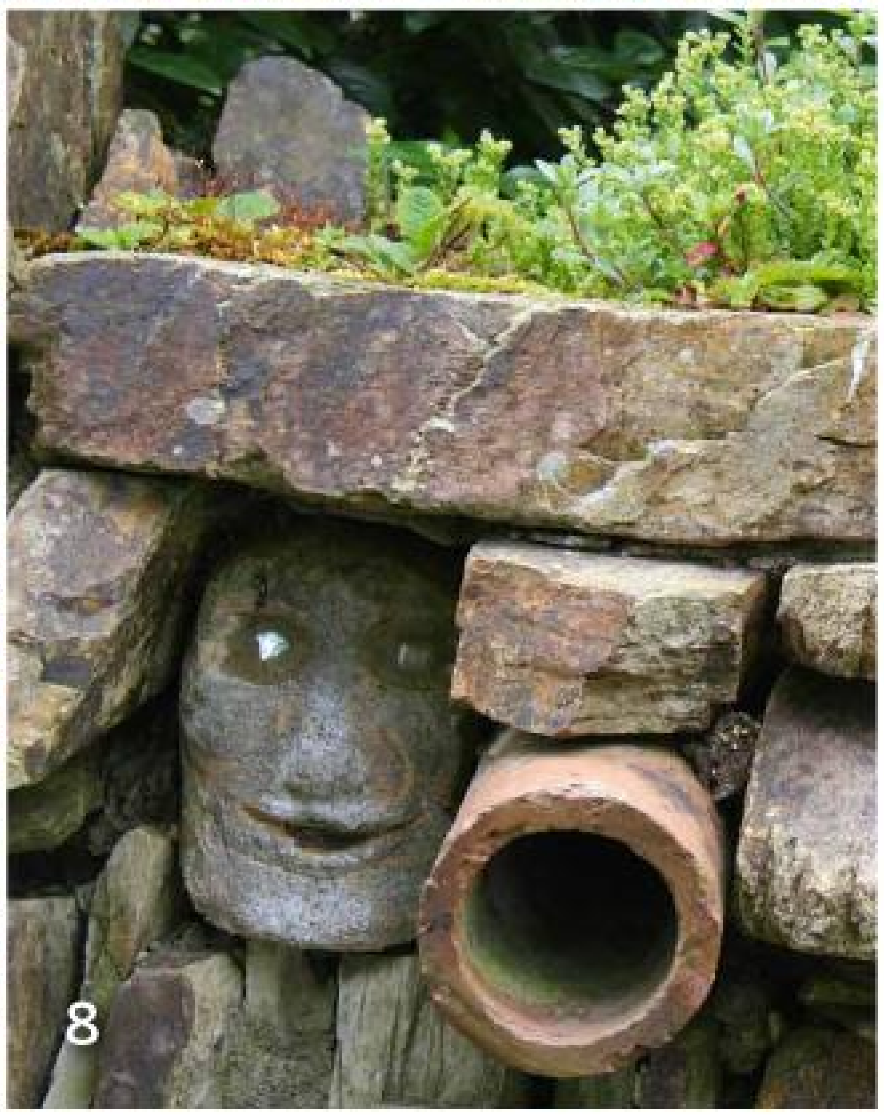

8

2-5 & 8 ANNIE GUILFOYLE 6 NEIL SETCHFIELD / ALAMY 7 JO WHITWORTH / GAP PHOTOS DESIGN: TOM STUART-SMITH

6 Site specific

Visiting gardens that share the same location and climate is beneficial, especially when you are trying to find inspiration for the planting. The garden of the late artist Derek Jarman, which is located on a bleak stretch of beach at Dungeness in Kent, is full of original ideas.

7 Learn from the experts

The RHS gardens are the perfect settings for gathering design inspiration and learning about plants. This sweeping garden designed by Tom Stuart-Smith surrounds the glasshouse at Wisley; the curvaceous borders demonstrate the value of late-season performers.

8 Ideas to steal

There are invariably ideas to take away from any garden visit. On one of my many trips to the Eden Project in Cornwall, I spotted this charming wall where various materials and sculptural elements have been added, creating a sense of fun and an element of surprise.

Books for further reading

- *The Book of Garden Plans* General Editor Andrew Wilson. Mitchell Beazley, £25.
- *The Book of Plans for Small Gardens.* General Editor Andrew Wilson. Mitchell Beazley, £25.
- *The RHS Encyclopedia of Garden Design.* Editor in Chief Chris Young. Dorling Kindersley, £25.

Shows

- Chaumont Garden Festival – annual event just outside Paris – www.domaine-chaumont.fr
- All the RHS shows – www.rhs.org.uk

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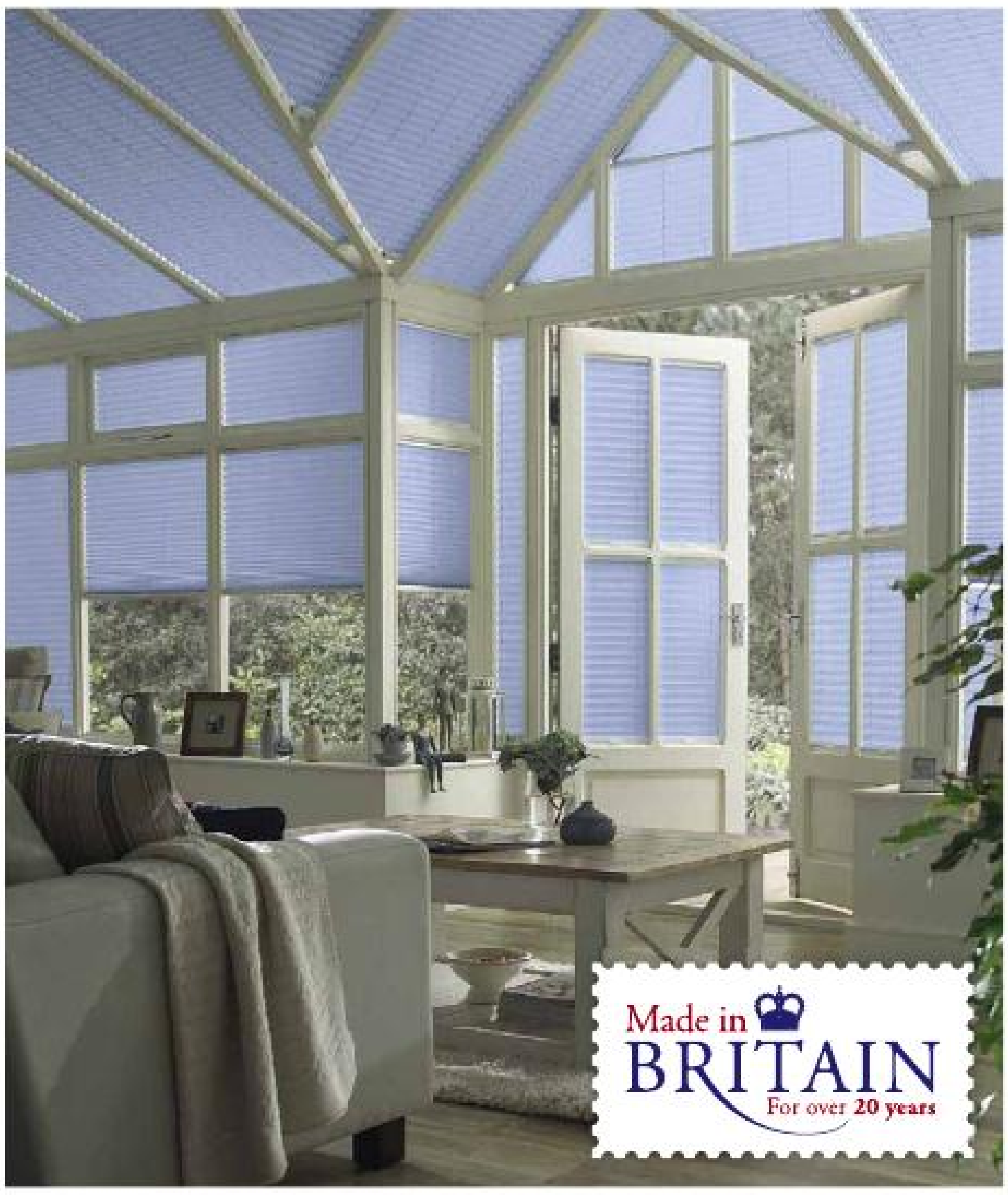

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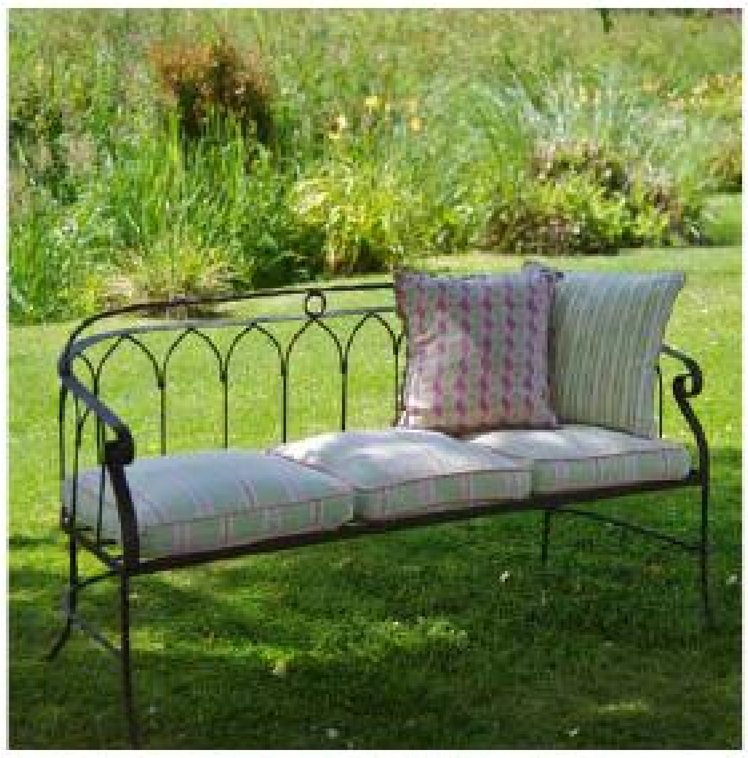

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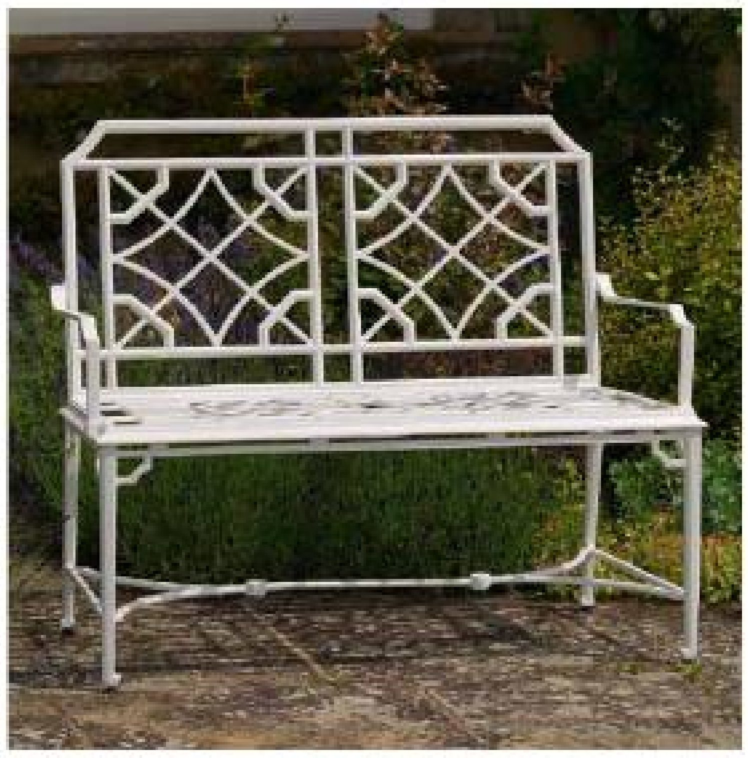

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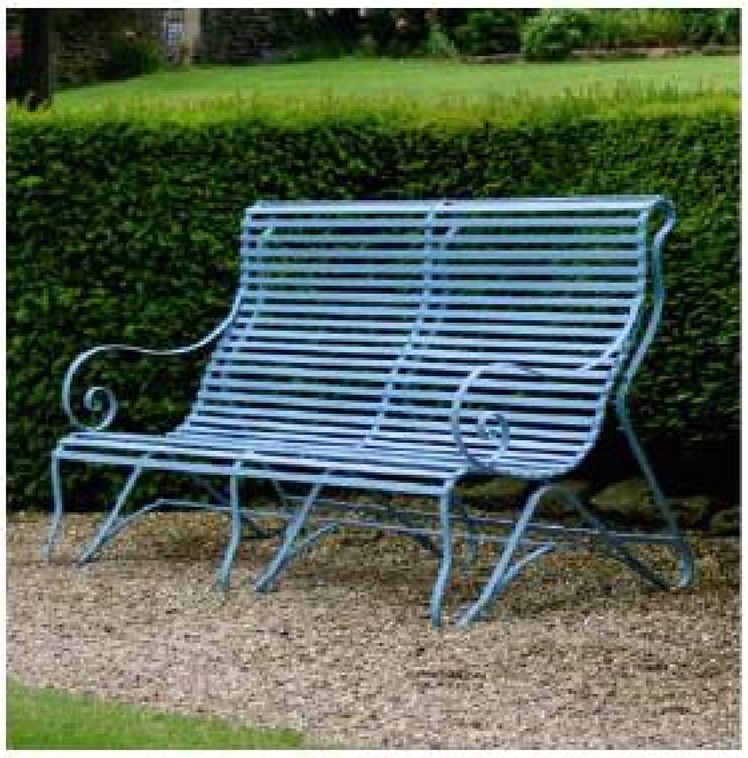

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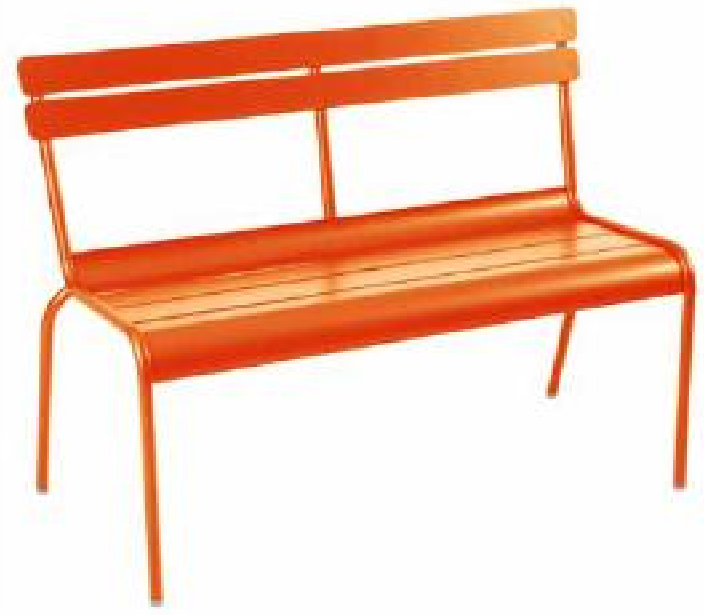

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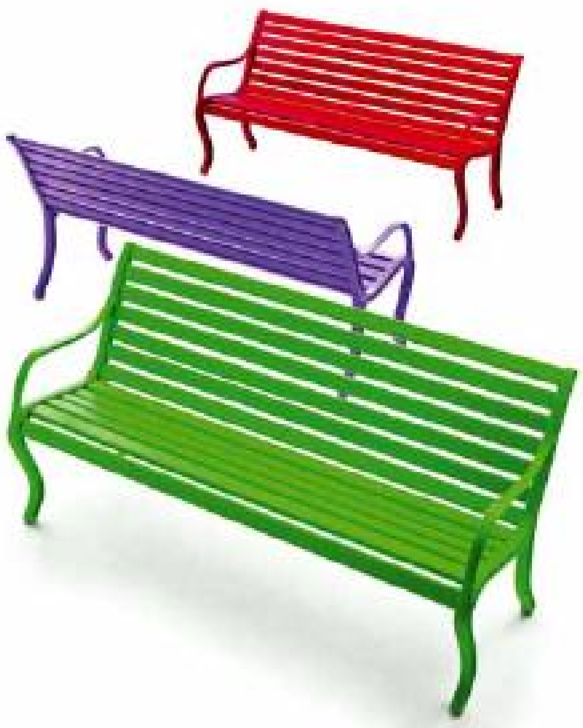

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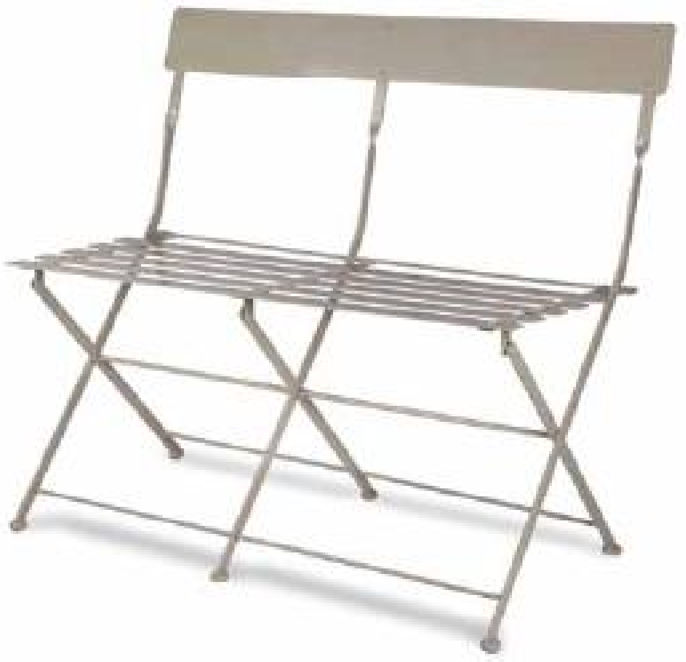

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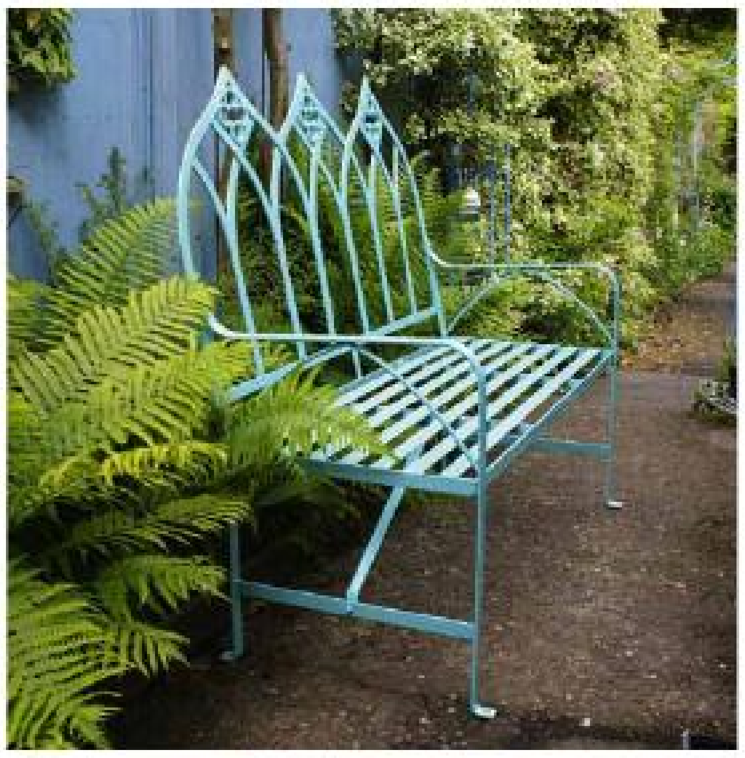

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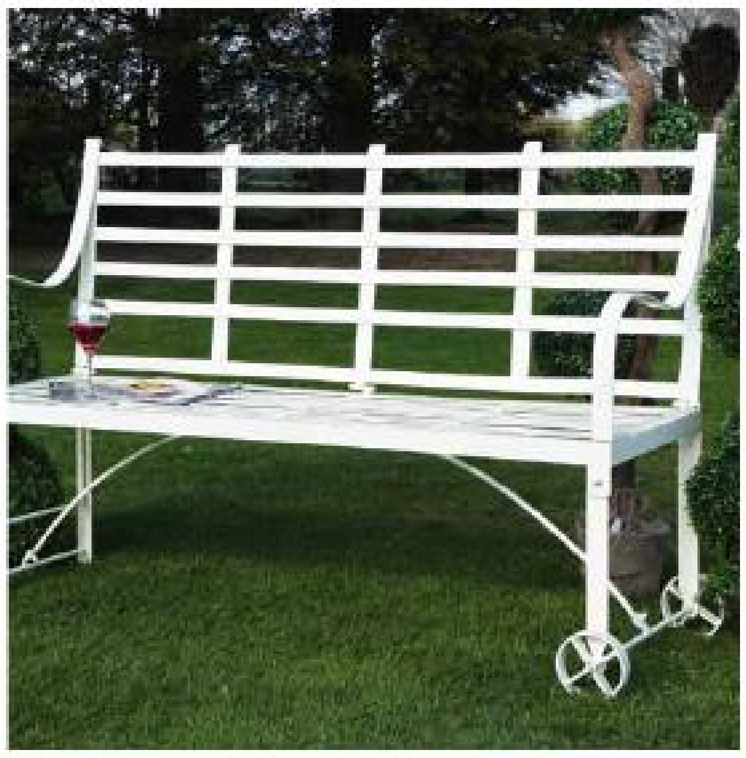

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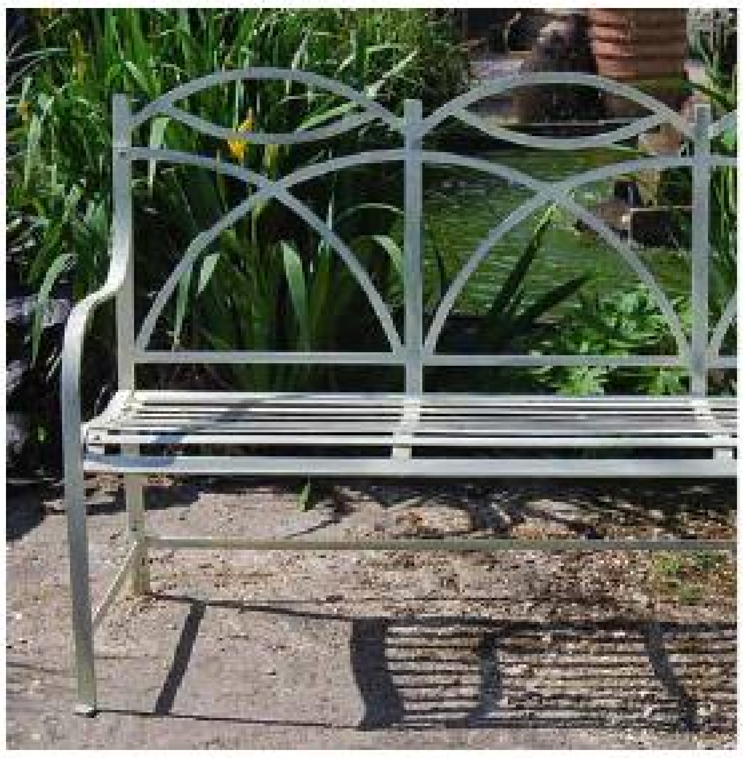

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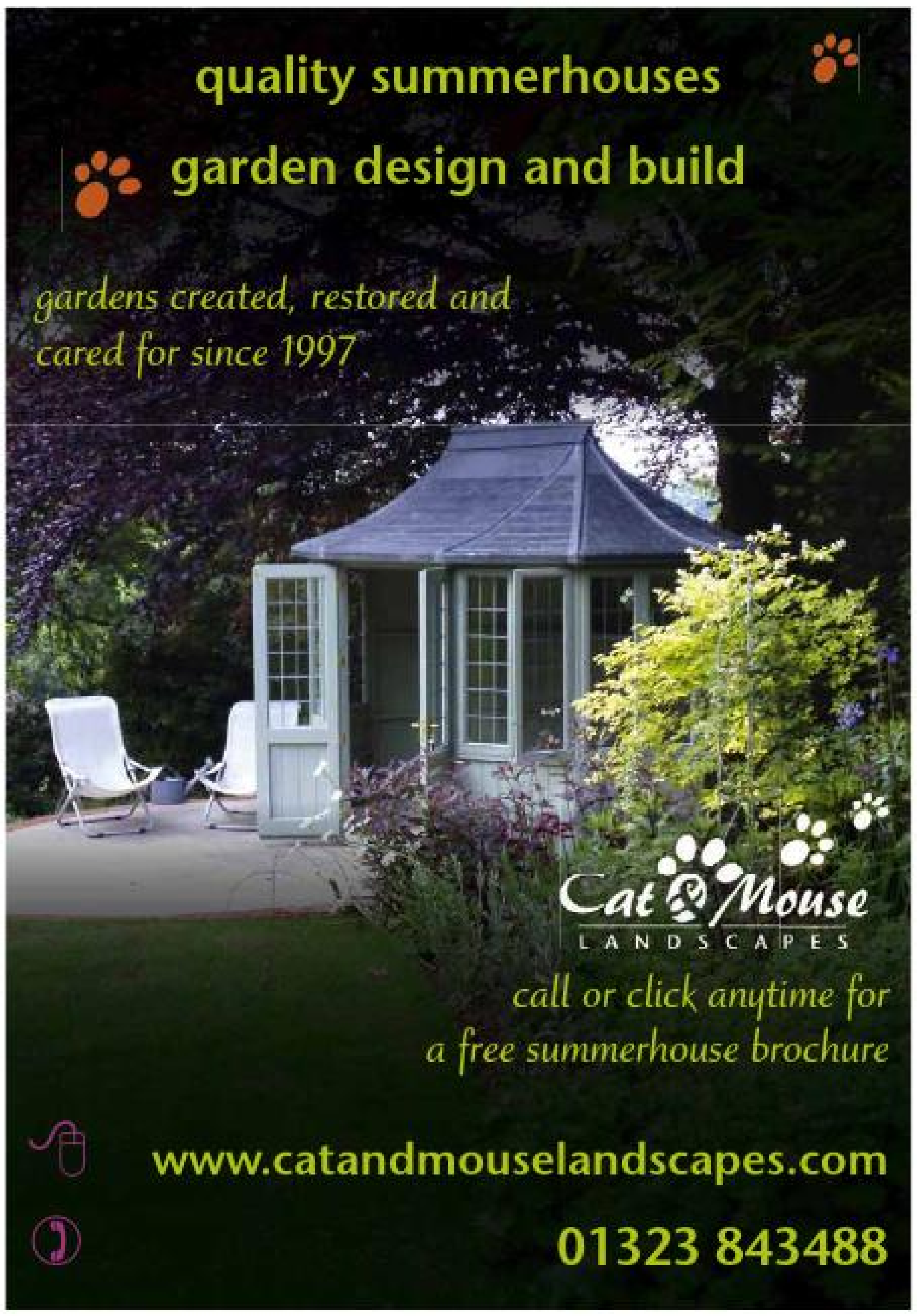

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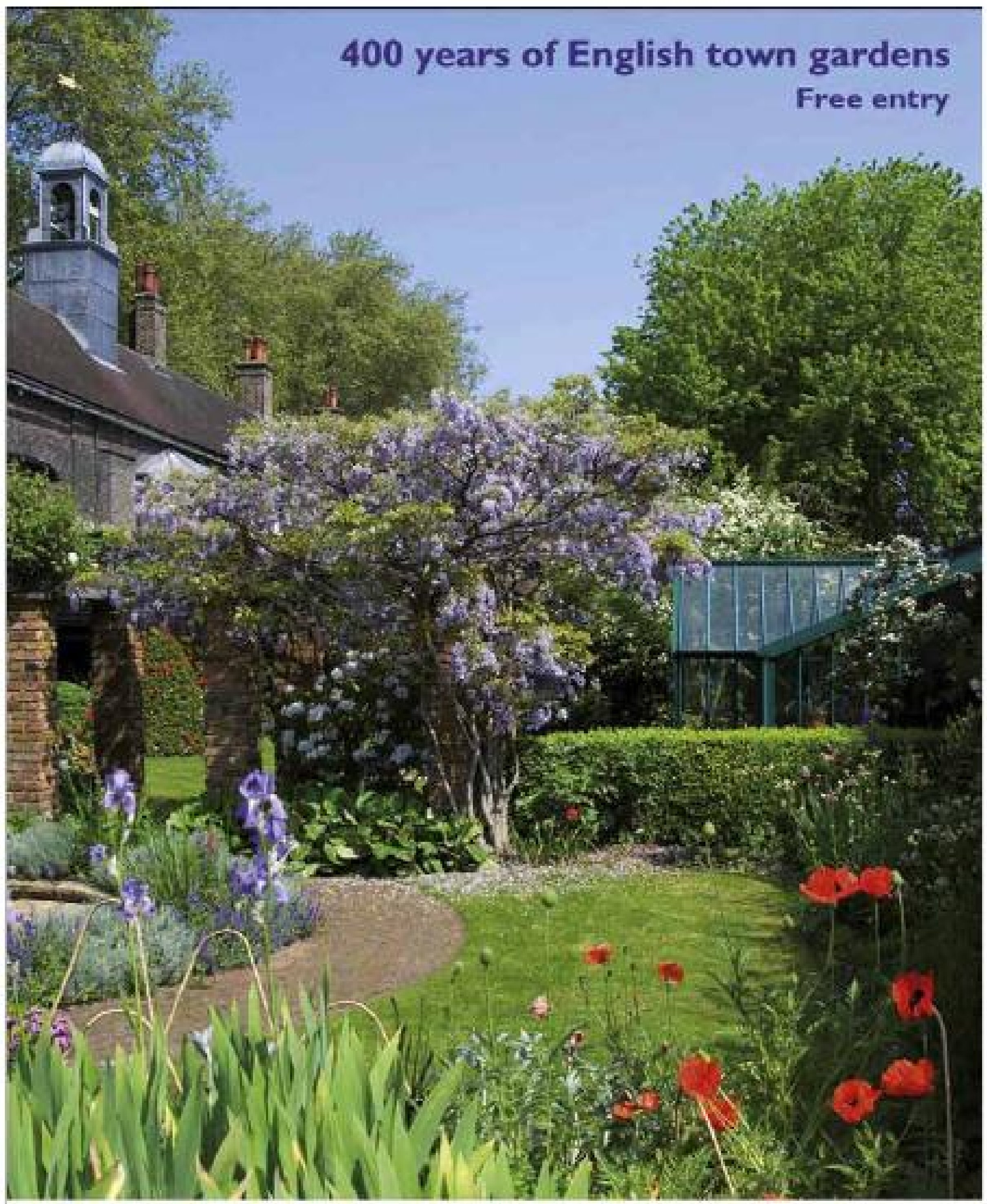

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Sun House at Long Melford, one of the gardens featured in *The Gardens of England*, reviewed on page 101.

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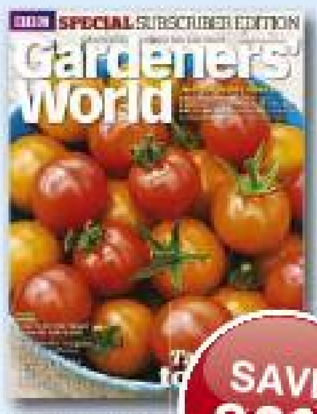
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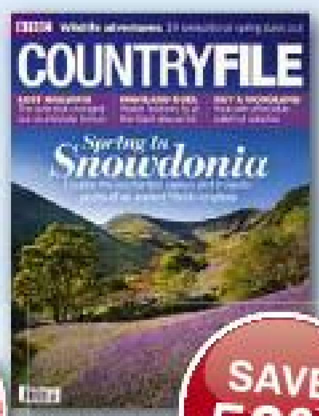
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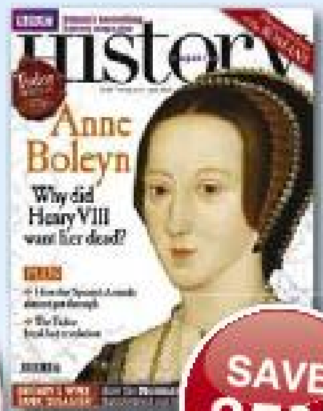
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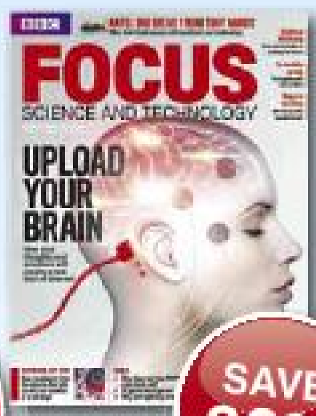
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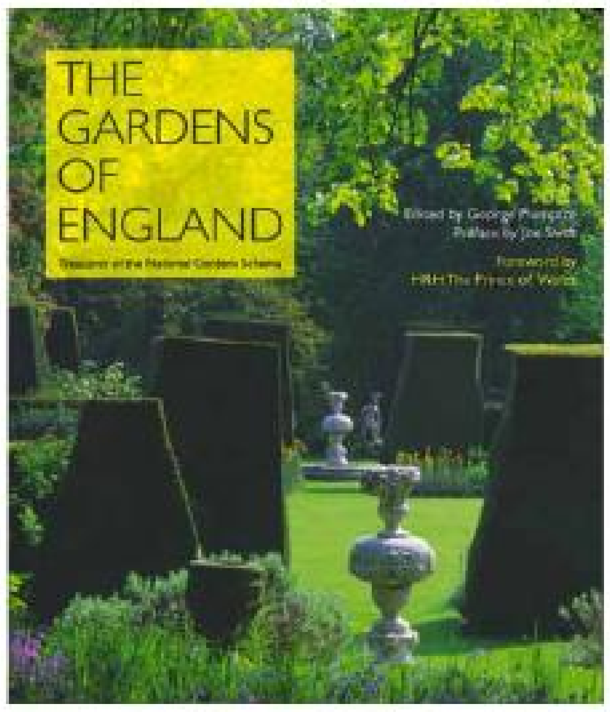
Book reviews

THE GARDENS OF ENGLAND

by George Plumptre (Editor)
Merrell, £24.95
ISBN 978-1858946023



ANDREW LAWSON

Scampston Hall in North Yorkshire is among the gardens covered in depth.

With some 4,000 gardens in England and Wales open to the public this year for the National Gardens Scheme (a charitable institution raising money for other charities since 1927) it could be difficult to choose potentially enjoyable/rewarding excursions. Entries in the annual comprehensive county-by-county guide, the famous *Yellow Book*, are written by the garden owners themselves (but subject to editorial diktats) resulting, sometimes, in an emphasis on 'teas' and 'lovely views'.

This well-illustrated large-format newcomer presents five chronological chapters by independent garden experts under the editorship of NGS chief executive George Plumptre, himself a respected garden writer and historian, who contributes his own lucid thoughts on the vagaries of this great British pastime.

Elizabeth Napier begins, saying that 'From an economic standpoint, the years between the wars were gloomy', and notes the deaths in the 1930s of the three 'giants of Edwardian times' – William Robinson, Gertrude Jekyll and Ellen Willmott. Napier's choice of 'Jazz Age' gardens, made at a time that saw 'both an end to and the beginning of fashions', include Norah Lindsay's Manor House at Sutton Courtenay in Oxfordshire and Blickling Hall in Norfolk, where she strongly influenced the formal design.

Catherine Horwood's 'New Era' (1940–59) embraces Sissinghurst, Cottesbrooke, Exbury and a personal favourite of my own, the beautifully kempt Longstock Water Gardens, irrigated by Hampshire's gin-clear River Test.

'The Years of Transition' (1960-1979 – 'marked by a generally freer and less reverential spirit') fall to Vanessa Berridge, where landscape designer Russell Page anticipated the work of our two extant veteran garden-makers, Beth Chatto (90 this year) and John Brookes.

Leslie Geddes-Brown takes us up to the Millennium, highlighting both grand and less grand gardens in Yorkshire, Derbyshire and London (a pity she didn't include her own Columbine Hall in Suffolk, which I rank highly).

The book's finale is given to Christopher Woodward, the young lion responsible for reviving fortunes at London's Garden Museum. Groundbreaking work by Tom Stuart-Smith and Piet Oudolf figure largely, although we are led to the less design-conscious tranquillity of Antony Woodward's Garden in the Clouds, hovering – appropriately – on a mountain between England and Wales.

David Wheeler is editor of gardening journal Hortus

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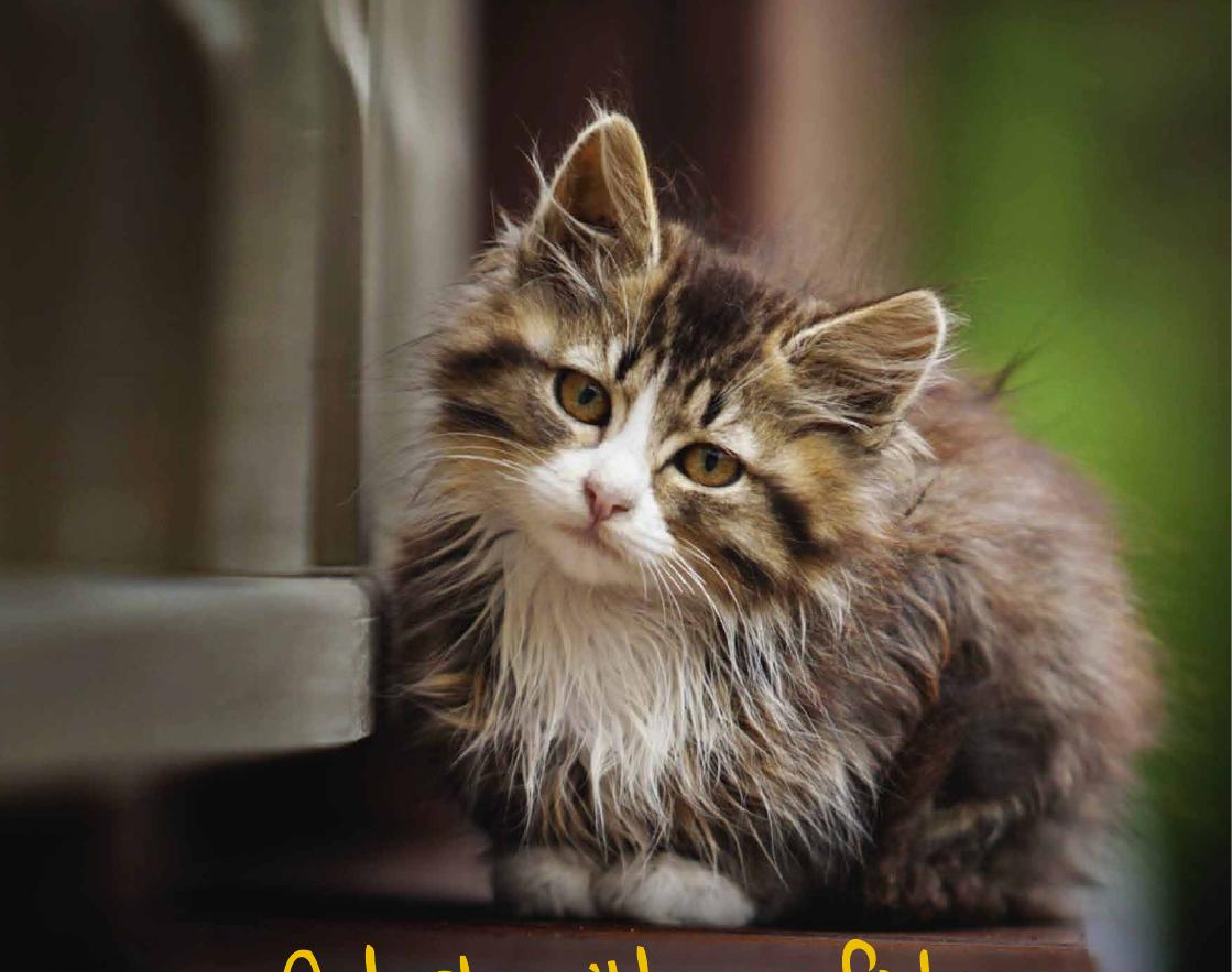

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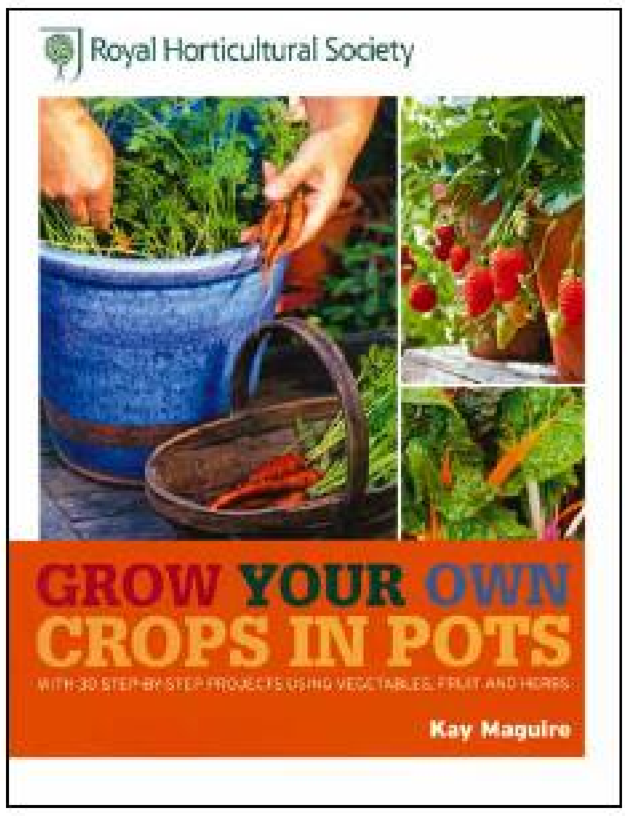
RHS GROW YOUR OWN CROPS IN POTS

by Kay Maguire

Mitchell Beazley, £16.99
ISBN 978-1845336868


Royal Horticultural Society
GROW YOUR OWN CROPS IN POTS
WITH 30 STEP-BY-STEP PROJECTS USING VEGETABLES, FRUIT AND HERBS
Kay Maguire

Part of a series of 'Grow Your Own' books from the RHS, this one focuses on edible projects for pots. The subject matter is nothing new – growing food in containers has been all the rage for years, especially in cities. Perhaps the fact the RHS has brought out this book shows just how mainstream it has become. While not breaking any new ground, it's an accessible and practical guide, written in a light and friendly way.

The book begins with a comprehensive 'tools and techniques' section, covering everything from planning your planting, sowing and watering, to harvesting and seed-saving. It then moves on to the edibles, dealing in detail with fruit, vegetables, herbs and flowers. A brief but useful glossary ensures the book is suitable for beginners.

It includes advice on how to grow more unusual edibles like figs and olives as well as the usual suspects. The fruit and flower sections prove that there's potential to grow far beyond salad leaves and tomatoes. Kay Maguire offers information on specific crops that work in containers, as well as suggesting possible potted combinations.

The 30 step-by-step projects promised on the book's cover are a highlight and include a mixed onion trug, herbal bath, aubergine crate and floral barrel. The spring project combining viola, lettuce, spinach, spring onion and radish in a trough sounds delicious, as does the summer one mixing pea, beetroot and cos lettuce in a 40cm-wide terracotta pot. Maguire's metre-square year round planner, embracing the American square foot concept, is a great inclusion and one to try if you have the space.

Which brings me on to my one niggle. As an urban gardener with only a tiny balcony, I was hoping to read something that realistically approached the challenges of growing when you don't actually have a garden (and associated storage space) or much of a budget. This book doesn't do that – the photography alone shows a certain amount of space is assumed – but it does offer plenty of practical project ideas to inspire you.

Helen Babbs is the author of My Garden, the City and Me

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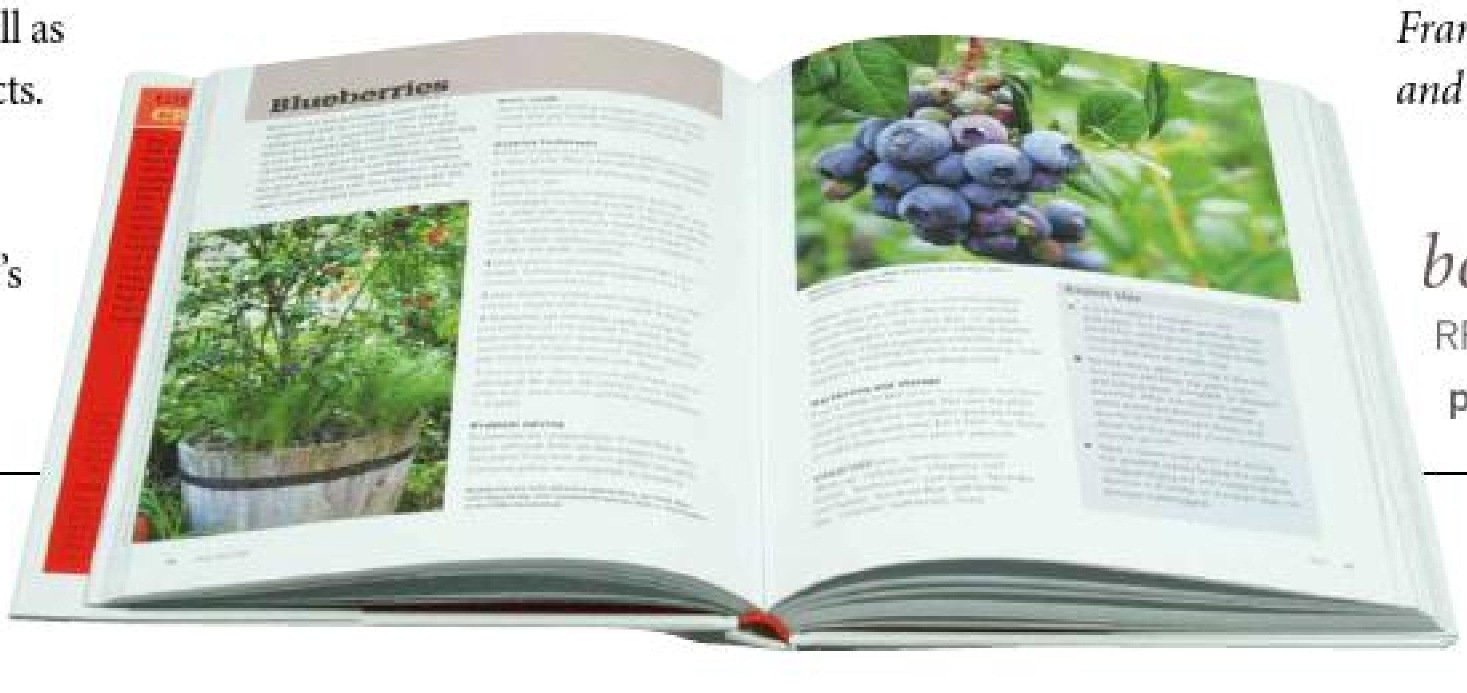

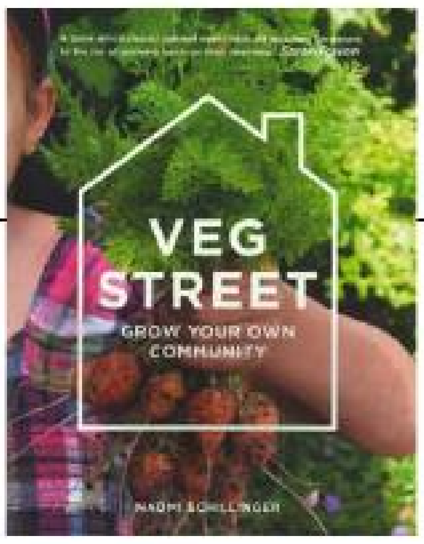

VEG STREET

by Naomi Schillinger

Short Books, £16.99
ISBN 978-1780721125

The auspicious growth of urban community gardening prompted Naomi Schillinger to get together to garden with a group of neighbours in Islington and tap into this flourishing appetite for eco food production on a local scale. Today they live in a street where residents are growing food in their front gardens, tree pits and window boxes, winning prizes and inspiring a plethora of other community grow-your-own schemes.

This is a well-organised book, probably reflecting the effort and skills that went into the original project, and the photos of householders proudly showing off their produce are inspirational. Working through the horticultural year, each month starts with a list: in June we are reminded to apply for community funding; primed with which plants to sow; given make-do-and-mend ideas on how to net strawberries; shown a delicious and cheap edible container (pea shoots); and given tips on harvesting. Hopefully this book will encourage us all to broaden our horticultural horizons and extend a soil-covered hand of friendship.

Francine Raymond is an author and Sunday Telegraph *columnist*

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Andrew Parkinson

BBC Wildlife

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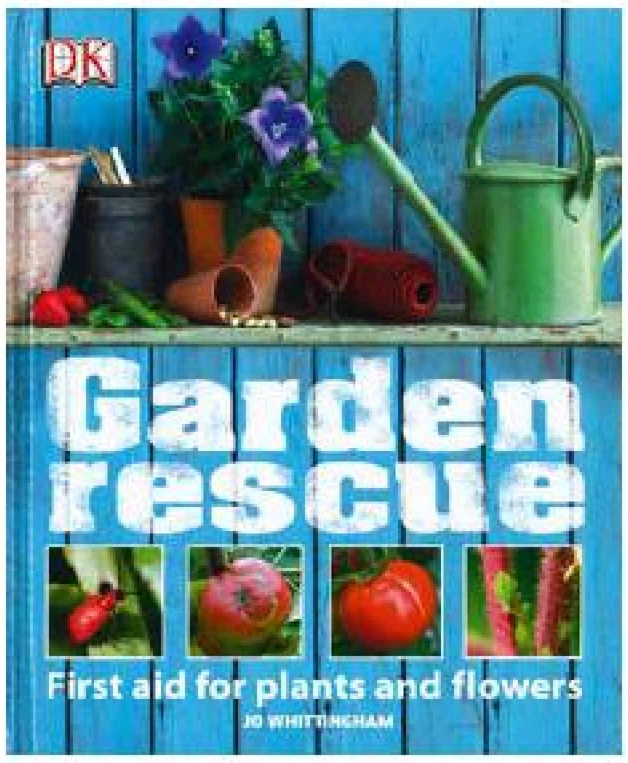
BBC COUNTRYFILE

Book reviews

GARDEN RESCUE

by Jo Whittingham
Dorling Kindersley, £12.99
ISBN 978-1409379096



Most gardeners, even those whose stylish creations grace the pages of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED, have been blighted by pests and diseases at some point in their career and have desperately sought solutions. With this in mind, Jo Whittingham's book, covering all of the common problems, provides a concise 'masterclass' in plant health, both prevention through good cultivation and cure.

You are led patiently and methodically through the basics of gardening, with the choice of growing with or without chemicals. By the end of this first section, you feel ready to absorb a range of problems and solutions in the edible and ornamental garden and on lawns with advice on plant care.

Symptoms charts, or a short consultancy at the plant clinic, allow problems to be pinpointed quickly and accurately and suitable solutions to be found. Information is delivered by skilful use of clear illustrations, easily digestible paragraphs and with a few exceptions, sharp photographs. The book is logical and very easy to use and understand – a tried and tested formula – exactly what you would expect from a Dorling Kindersley publication.

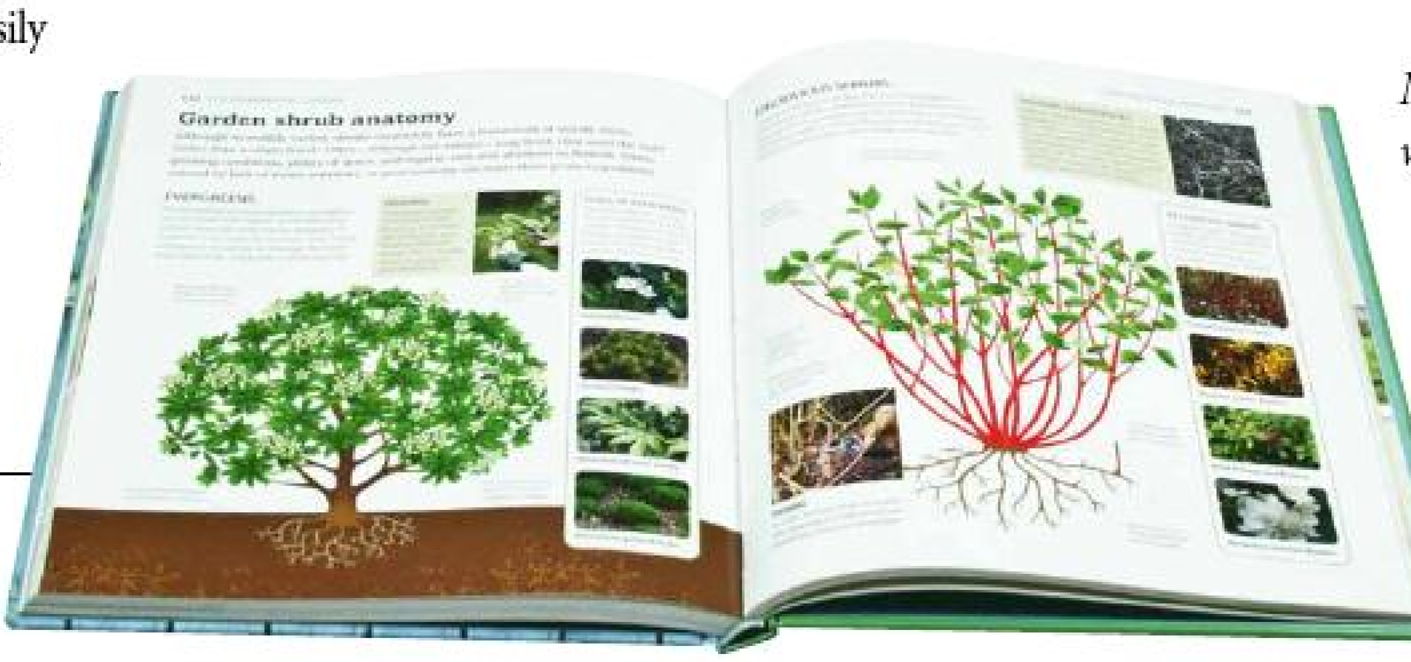
It is particularly gratifying to see fruit-growing presented in a positive and simplified manner and the mystique stripped away from pruning; large, clear diagrams, ensuring that you can cut with confidence (a format repeated in the 'Ornamental' section.)

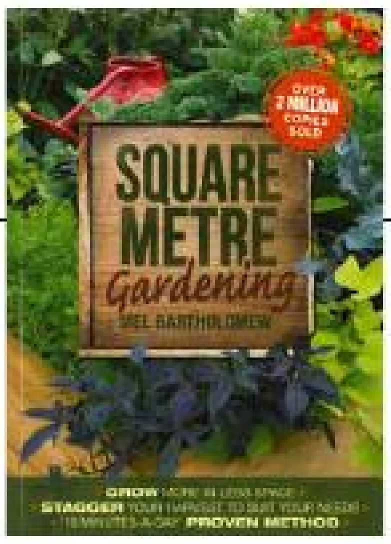
Jo has produced a book that is perfect for reassuring beginners, who are meeting problems for the first time or experienced gardeners in need of an instant reminder. These are the words of a fellow gardener, aimed at bringing success and delivered in an accessible style. There's no blinding with science or bamboozling with Latin, just simple, practical solutions to your plant health problems, that everyone can understand. The book has the reassuring tones of a trusted family doctor, with the same bedside manner. After reading it you feel that, should problems occur, there is nothing to fear; with a few remedial actions, everything will be just fine.

Matthew Biggs is a presenter and Kew-trained gardener

book offer

RRP £12.99. **Reader offer price £11.99** including p&p.

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by Mel Bartholomew
Frances Lincoln, £12.99
ISBN 978-0711234529

Square Metre Gardening has been adapted for the UK market from bestselling US title, *All New Square Foot Gardening*. In that book, Mel Bartholomew wrote about a method of growing edibles in raised beds that he'd begun to develop in the mid-1970s. Noticing that many people were strapped for space, he came up with the idea of making a 3ft by 3ft ($1m^2$) wooden bed, which had room for nine different crops thanks to a wooden grid fixed to the top.

This edition is the first aimed at converting British gardeners to his growing technique. The language has been anglicised, imperial measurements converted into metric and all the plants mentioned are suitable for our climate.

In its 12 chapters, the author covers everything from building the raised beds to making 'Mel's Mix', his own blend of compost. There are sections on planting, vertical gardening, extending the seasons and what to grow.

The book is crammed with useful illustrations, plant portraits and plenty of step-by-step photographs. Overall, it's an inspirational guide to making the most of a compact space.

Martyn Cox is a garden writer and author

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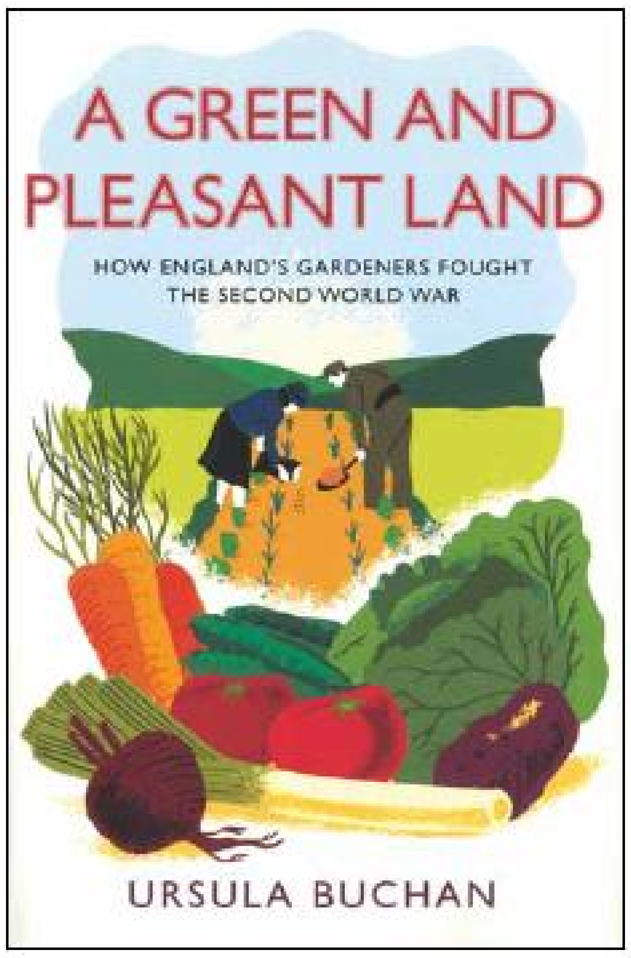
Book reviews

A GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND

by Ursula Buchan
Hutchinson, £20
ISBN 978-0091944155


A GREEN AND PLEASANT LAND
HOW ENGLAND'S GARDENERS FOUGHT THE SECOND WORLD WAR
URSULA BUCHAN

It's one of those 'Is the Pope Catholic?' questions. Is a book by the most erudite and elegant of garden writers, on a topic as fascinating as the Second World War, going to be a good read?

With unfailing wit and occasional astonishment, Buchan tells how the British government urged its citizens to contribute to the war effort by growing fruit and vegetables. During the First World War, over-reliance on food imports had brought Britain to the brink of catastrophe. Yet in 1939, over half our total consumption of foodstuffs was still coming from abroad. There was an urgent need to grow more – especially foods that would supply the vitamins no longer available from imported fruits. The civilian population was exhorted to 'Dig for Victory', not only to make good these deficiencies, but to keep busy and to boost morale. Gardening, it was reckoned, would have a steadying effect on the nation's nerves.

Buchan shows that this achievement was more symbolic than actual: many households, especially in the North, proved resolutely 'impervious to the blandishments of Ministry propaganda'. But this shared enterprise of gardening proves a fascinating lens through which to view many other aspects of the war – information and propaganda, the changing role of women, the clash of rural and urban societies, social justice, even nutrition.

Buchan studied history before gardening, so there is no surprise at the exhaustiveness of her research. But the weight of facts is leavened invariably with delicious nuggets that will make you laugh out loud – a ditty on potato peelings, or the outrageous claim that the success of RAF night missions could be ascribed to eating carrots.

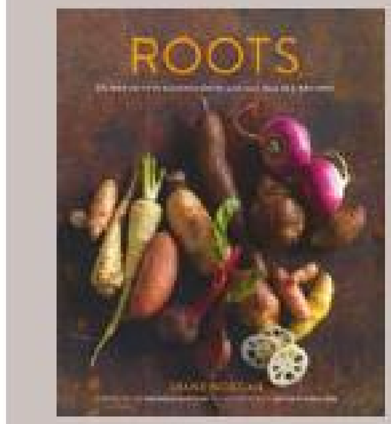
On the back cover is a quote from Churchill: 'War is the normal occupation of man – war and gardening'. Buchan shows us the reverse: the heartbreak, the injustice, the incredible pettifogging bureaucracy of life on the 'Home Front'; but also the unlikely acts of what we can only call heroism, from jam-makers, nurserymen, even schoolchildren – normal people making the best of cruelly abnormal times.

Ambra Edwards is a gardens writer and author

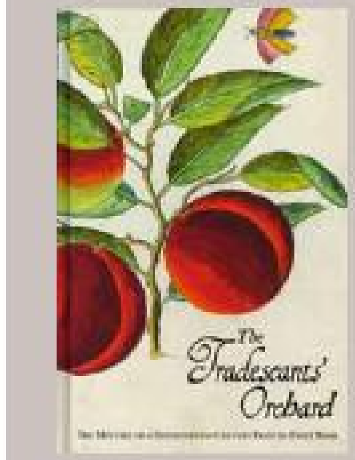
book offer

RRP £20. **Reader offer price £18** including p&p.

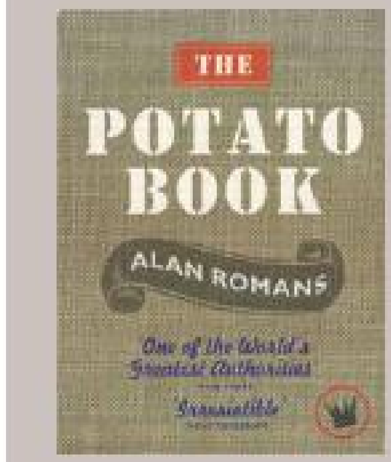
Other recently released books for gardeners



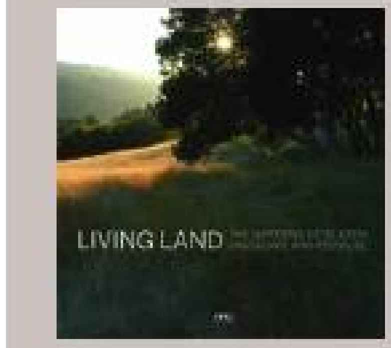
ROOTS
by Diane Morgan
Chronicle, £25
ISBN 978-0811878371
The underworld of roots, from the familiar (carrot) to the unfamiliar (galangal).



THE TRADESCANT'S ORCHARD
by Barrie Juniper and Hanneke Grootenboer
Bodleian Library, £30
ISBN 978-1851242771
This 17th-century painted fruit book examined.



THE POTATO BOOK
by Alan Romans
Frances Lincoln, £16.99
ISBN 978-0711234000
The history of the potato from its beginnings in South America to the development of variety breeding.



LIVING LAND
by Eric Blasen
Oro Editions, £25.50
ISBN 978-0711233454
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Letters

Have your say – we'd like to hear your views, so please write to us at: GARDENS ILLUSTRATED, 9th Floor, Tower House, Fairfax Street, Bristol BS1 3BN, or email letters@gardensillustrated.com

Star letter

Early adopter

Just before boarding a train for Florence, Italy, in late April 1993, I bought a copy of a brand new garden magazine. I was hooked. For some time I bought single copies but soon enough I became a subscriber – and still am. It has now become a habit of mine to start every new year by leafing through GARDENS ILLUSTRATED from the very first issue onwards in order to prepare myself for the oncoming gardening season. For me and my wife that means tending the garden of our mid-18th-century holiday home, which is situated as far southeast you can go in Sweden (at about the same latitude as Dublin, Sheffield or Lincoln). What strikes me each time I go through my complete set of GARDENS ILLUSTRATED is the high quality of the writing and the sheer beauty of the magazine. Just looking at the covers is enough to make you happy! So, my thanks to all contributors over the years to the world's most beautiful garden magazine.

Dr B Larkner, Linköping, Sweden

VISITING

Mystery garden

I have been reading April's issue and liked the front cover photograph, but can find no reference to the garden itself. If it is open to the public could you put details of its whereabouts in the next issue for people to be able to visit?

Ruthie McNally, Malvern

Ed's reply: The image in question shows the gate at Grafton Cottage, Barton-Under-Needwood, Staffordshire DE13 8AL. www.ngs.org.uk/gardens
Open for the NGS. Admission £3, children free. 30 June; 21 July; 4, 11 August, 11.30am-5pm. Visitors by appointment June to August, minimum admission £60 per group.

POTATO BLIGHT

Spud plan

Regarding your potato blight article (January 2013 issue), I have experimented with growing some 'Charlotte' potatoes in April. I made a few mounds of compost on top of fresh grass, about 45cm apart, and covered my potatoes with about 15cm of recycled-green-waste compost, earthing them up once during 4 months. I harvested 15lbs of potatoes, without blight. This isn't conclusive, but I think it's worth more experimentation.

Naomi Schillinger, by email

POLLINATORS

Bee necessities

With regard to Steve Alton's Talking Point (March 2013, p104), I couldn't agree more.

Pollinating insects are vital to our ecosystem and we are beholden to provide as much food, in the form of pollen and nectar, as we can. Many people think that in order to provide a suitable habitat for pollinators they have to plant a wild flower meadow or allow their garden to 'go native'. Pollinators adore wild and native flowers, but they also delight in a whole range of cultivated garden plants.

The key is to choose the right plants. Having written two books about the subject (*The Bee Garden* and *Plants and Planting Plans for a Bee Garden*), there are, to my mind, two major points to bear in mind: choose plants with single flowers and try to select plants which, together, cover a long flowering season.

Maureen Little, by email

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TALKING POINT

George Plumtre on the forthcoming National Gardens Scheme Weekend.

George Plumptre is chief executive of the National Gardens Scheme (www.ngs.org.uk)

The National Gardens Scheme has set itself a target of raising £500,000 in two days over one weekend, 15-16 June. Nothing on this scale has ever been attempted before; during the two days 800 gardens will open throughout every county in England and Wales. By creating an event, the aim is to showcase and promote what garden owners do to fund nursing and caring charities, which continues to be too much of a secret – even for many keen garden visitors.

The annual beneficiaries include Macmillan and Marie Curie. Everyone knows what great work they both do, but not many people know that the NGS is the largest single benefactor of both, having given them more than £14m and £6m respectively. By raising awareness the NGS is looking to encourage more people to visit the gardens and take part in this first ever fundraising festival. We are looking for as much help as possible to swell visitor numbers over the two days and celebrate the fantastic work of our garden owners.

- What's your view? Write to us by post or email (details above).
We reserve the right to edit letters.

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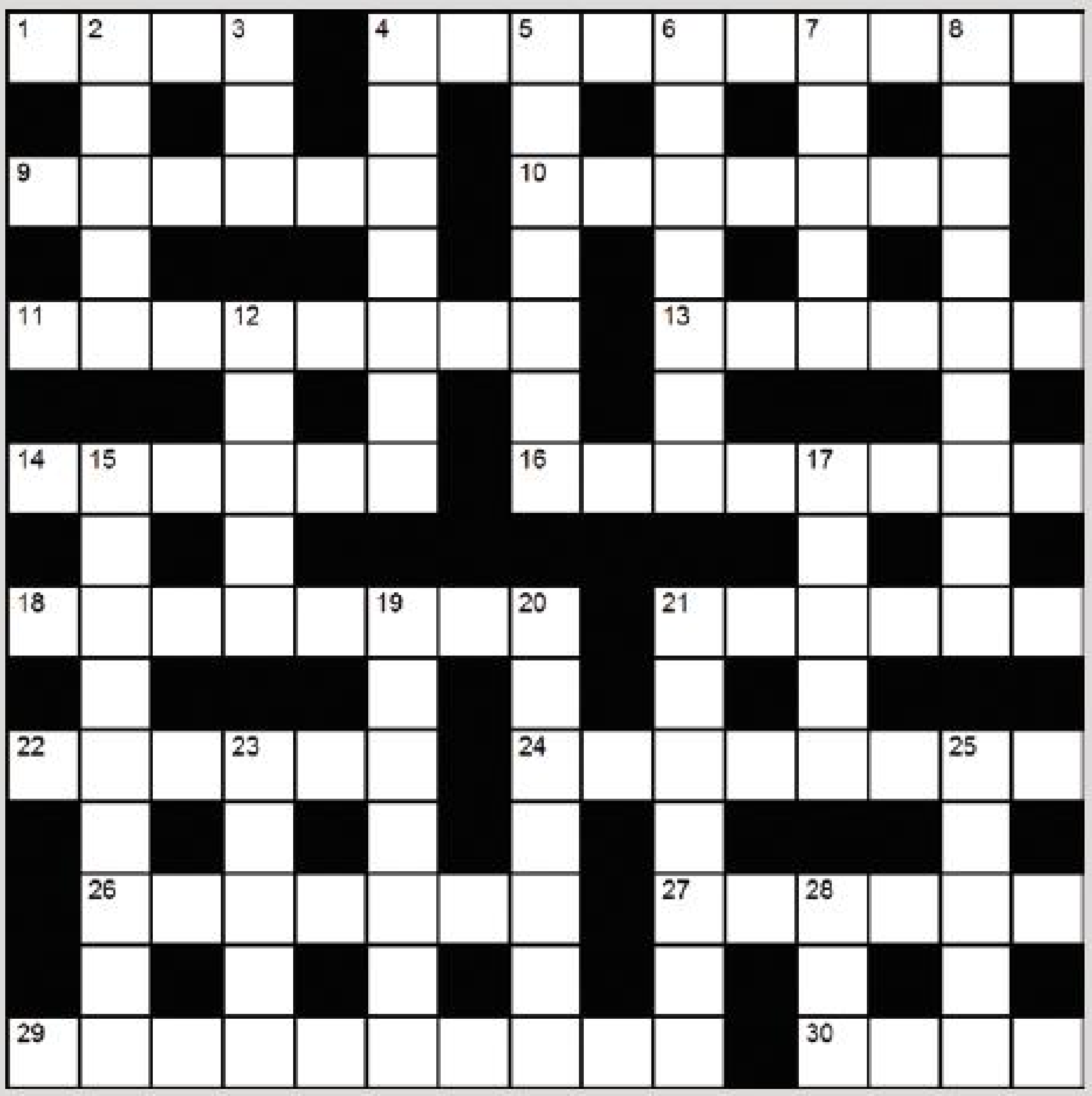

ACROSS

1 Fungal disease in potatoes, in disc abutilons (4)
4 Big, blue poppy – 'Pisces Moon' variety? (10)
9 Apply manure, or marmite maybe? (6)
10 Wormwood, genus *Artemisia*, damages worm gut (7)
11 Get out into the garden for this – hear firs stirring (5,3)
13 Propagates plants in a down-to-earth fashion (6)
14 Roses I transformed into willows for weaving (6)
16 Non-professionals, mature variety, placed between two extremes of aruncus (8)
18 Renowned German plantsman – a subtly different forester! (8)
21 Tiny sap-suckers – causing stumbles round end of path (6)
22 It's not needed in a cold frame (6)
24 Shade-loving plants won't mind the lack of it (8)
26 "Its stalks are cooked as fruit," stage actors murmur (7)
27 Violet-blue dye is obtained from this plant (6)
29 Another name for *Pulmonaria* – dalmatian sort? (7,3)
30 Not cultivated for garden use (4)

DOWN

2 Edible flower bud of a thorny shrub – start of Conference pear, oddly (5)
3 A pollinator in *Astilbe* 'Elegans' (3)
4 Apple-like fruits best eaten when decaying (7)
5 County location of Levens Hall – cold Italian region! (7)
6 Hardy annual – the glamorous cook's first! (7)
7 Shrub with showy flowers – open out at end of day (5)
8 One lot of plants grown between another – makes nicer port (5-4)
12 An asparagus stem (5)
15 Common name for *Sedum* – awfully poor scent! (9)
17 Partly clear thicket for soil (5)
19 Having three leaflets confused tree ant (7)
20 Partly opened flower from eg David Austin? (7)
21 Having an inclination for cultivating (7)
23 Faith gets time with fungal disease that turns leaves brown! (5)
25 A primula auricula, male version of 6 (5)
28 Spadework reveals early-morning moisture (3)

SOLUTIONS TO THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD WILL BE PRINTED NEXT MONTH

MAY'S SOLUTIONS
ACROSS: 1 Genus **4** Bluebell **8** Plot **9** Trait **10** Ammi **11** Merlin **12/22** Bleeding heart **13** Rosette **15** Pedate **17** Odessa **19** Weather **21** E H Wilson **24** Caltha **25** Palm **26** Posts **28** Trailer **29** Spray.

DOWN: 1 Golden rod **2** Nettles **3** Satin **4** Bramble **5** Untie **6/27** Bearded iris **7** Lemon **14** Tea **15** Pea **16** Torch-lily **18** Skimmia **19** Windsor **20** Hillier **23** Sepal **24** Casts.

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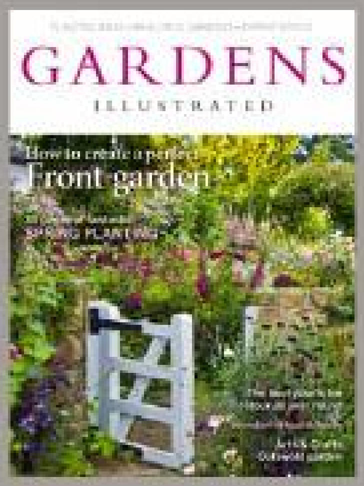

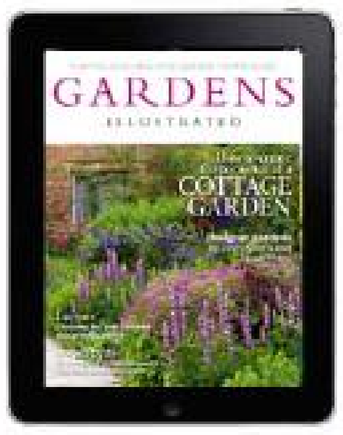

APRIL 2013
Create the perfect front garden; 30 pages of fantastic spring planting; plants for seasonal colour; wonderful wallflowers; Arts & Crafts Cotswold garden.

MAY 2013
The RHS Chelsea Flower Show, including a look at the show's 100-year history; country garden ideas; pots for pollinators; the best aquilegias; wooden planters.

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TEL **0161 941 1025** WEBSITE **www.nationaltrust.org.uk/dunhammassey**

2 BORDE HILL GARDEN

Explore this award-winning garden with a fine collection of 1900s trees and shrubs, and marvel at the outdoor 'rooms' including: The Azalea Ring in a blaze of colour in May, fabulous Rose Garden, with 600 David Austin roses and Gold Standard rose beds, the elegant Italian Garden and plenty of herbaceous borders. Relax in the magical woodland and enjoy the outstanding vistas across the parkland and Ouse Valley Viaduct . Open daily 10am–6pm until 3 November 2013.

ADDRESS **Borde Hill Lane, Haywards Heath, W Sussex RH16 1XP**
TEL **01444 450326** WEBSITE **www.bordehill.co.uk**

3 RHS GARDEN ROSEMOOR

Rosemoor is an enchanting and inspirational 65 acre garden no matter when you visit. In June, a fantastic fusion of beauty and perfume greets visitors when 2,000 roses reach their peak, followed by a riot of colour as the stunning Hot Garden starts to explode into flower. With over 130 events, courses and workshops every year, a plant centre, gift shop, licensed restaurant and tea room, it makes for a garden lover's great day out.

ADDRESS **Great Torrington, Devon EX38 8PH**
TEL **01805 626800** WEBSITE **www.rhs.org.uk/rosemoor**

4 PASHLEY MANOR GARDENS

At Pashley the gardens are spectacular all summer and in June the fragrant, colour-themed plantings of over 100 varieties of roses are at their best. The Head Gardener will be leading rose walks/talks around the garden on all three days of the Rose Weekend, 14–16 June, and there will be a good selection of Peter Beales Roses on sale. The wonderful café, with seating along the terrace, will also be open.

ADDRESS **Ticehurst, Near Wadhurst, East Sussex, TN5 7HE**
TEL **01580 200888** WEBSITE **www.pashleymanorgardens.com**

5 THE BISHOP'S PALACE

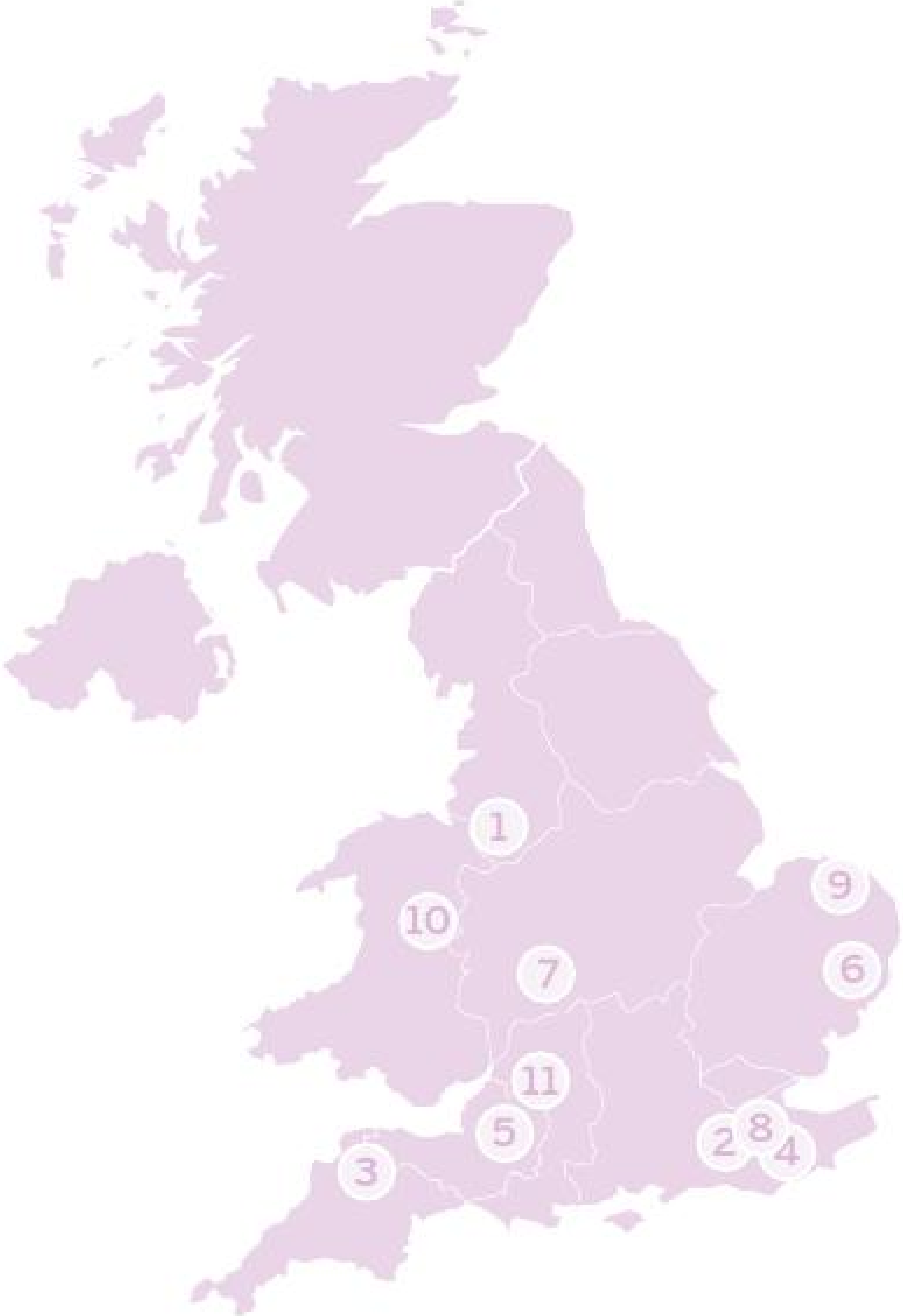
Fourteen acres of romantic and picturesque gardens reveal some of the best fragrant roses in the South West, rare specimen trees, a unique Bishop's Dahlia border, well pools and a wild arboretum. A 'must-see' in the historic City of Wells. Available for weddings. NEW! Community Garden and Garden of Reflection.

ADDRESS **Wells, Somerset BA5 2PD**
TEL **01749 988111** WEBSITE **www.bishopspalace.org.uk**

6 HELMINGHAM HALL GARDENS

Grade 1 listed gardens, redesigned by Lady Tollemache (Chelsea Gold Medallist) set in a 400-acre deer park surrounding a moated Tudor Hall. Visitors are enchanted by the stunning herbaceous borders within the walled kitchen garden, the herb, knot and wild gardens as well as two magnificent rose gardens.

ADDRESS **Helmingham, Stowmarket, Suffolk, IP14 6EF**
TEL **01473 890799** WEBSITE **www.helmingham.com**



7 RAGLEY GARDENS

This stunning stately home Rose Garden shows how to inter-plant roses with herbaceous plants, trees and shrubs to best effect. This increase in diversity extends seasonal interest creating dramatic planting combinations. Ragley is hosting a series of 'Garden Walks' with head gardener, Ross Barbour talking about how he achieved this contemporary garden. For more details on 'Garden Walks' and visitor opening please visit our website or give us a call.

ADDRESS **Ragley Hall, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 5NN**
TEL **01789 762090** WEBSITE **www.ragley.co.uk**

8 HEVER CASTLE

Romantic 13th-century, double-moated castle, the childhood home of Anne Boleyn, nestling in the heart of Kent. Explore the quintessential English garden with glorious formal and natural landscape including topiary, walled rose garden with over 4,000 roses, magnificent classical statuary, fountains, grottoes, lake, yew and water mazes. Shops, restaurants and special events include Rose Week and Country Life at the Castle.

ADDRESS **Hever Castle, Kent TN8 7NG**
TEL **01732 865224** WEBSITE **www.hevercastle.co.uk**

9 MANNINGTON GARDENS

Throughout the gardens are thousands of roses, especially classic varieties. In the Heritage and Modern Rose Gardens are roses in areas with designs reflecting their date of origin from the 15th century to the present day. Complementary planting of other species to fit in with the dated gardens continues every year. The Contemporary Garden features more roses, shrubs and herbaceous borders with brighter colours and modern varieties.

ADDRESS **Norwich, Norfolk NR11 7BB**
TEL **01263 768444** WEBSITE **www.manningtongardens.co.uk**

10 POWIS CASTLE GARDENS

Powis Castle Gardens has an extensive collection of traditional and modern roses, formidable rose beds uniquely under planted with herbaceous plants. We also have a large array of rare trained climbing roses on the terrace walls; wooden poles and garden structures, all maintained using traditional techniques.

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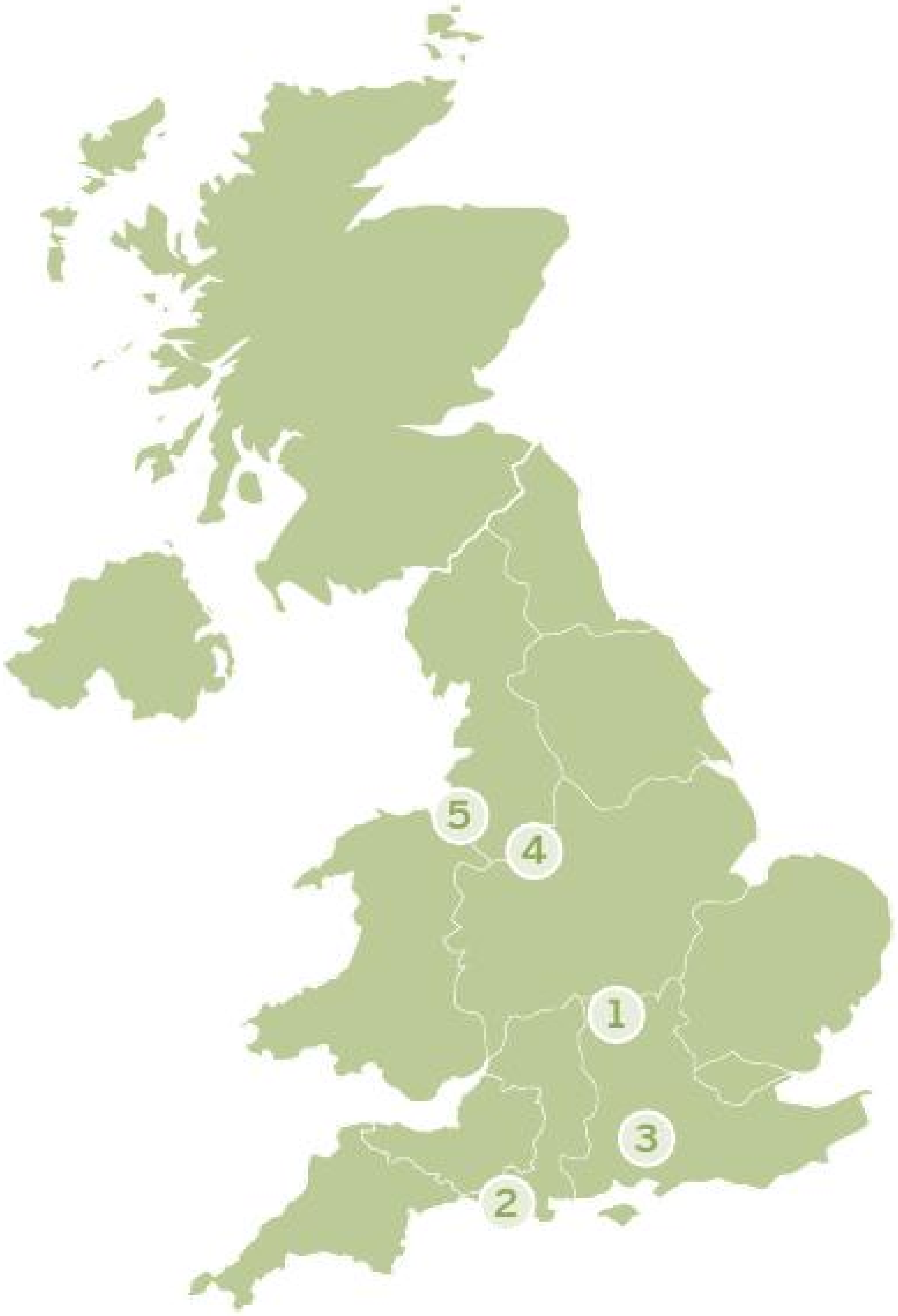
11 ABBEY HOUSE

Relax, unwind and soak up the perfume, colour and atmosphere that abound in these heavenly five acres of gardens in ancient Malmesbury town centre. Bring friends, meet friends, relax by the river; refreshing your mind, body and spirit amid the country's largest display of roses in a variety of microclimates.

ADDRESS **Malmesbury, Wiltshire SN16 9AS**
WEBSITE **www.abbeyhousegardens.co.uk**

June in Bloom

June is a wonderful month to see a stunning display in a gorgeous garden. Make the trip, come rain or shine. You're bound to be glad you did.



1 WATERPERRY GARDENS

June brings lupins to the herbaceous border as it blooms with summer colour, and the Mary Rose Garden is in all its full glory. Don't miss the Rare Plant Fair on the 9 June. There's also a Plant Centre, Garden Shop, Gift Barn, Gallery, Teashop, events and gardening courses. Open 10am to 5.30pm with Late Night opening Wednesday to Saturday 10am–6pm (until 21 September 2013).

ADDRESS **Waterperry, Near Wheatley, Oxfordshire OX33 1JZ**
TEL **01844 339226** WEB **www.waterperrygardens.co.uk**

2 ABBOTSBURY SUBTROPICAL GARDENS

Winner of the HHA/Christie's Garden of the Year Award in 2012 and described by Alan Titchmarsh as "One of the finest gardens I have ever visited". Located near Weymouth, these gardens are now one of the best in the country, famous for camellias, magnolias and stunning summer colour. Open 10am–6pm 7 days except for Christmas and New Year.

ADDRESS **Bullers Way, Abbotsbury, Dorset DT3 4LA**
TEL **01305 871387** WEB **www.abbotsburygardens.co.uk**

3 GILBERT WHITE'S HOUSE

Visit Gilbert White's House for the 21st Unusual Plant Fair on Saturday 15 and Sunday 16 June, open 10.30am – 5pm. There will be rare plants, garden sundries and refreshments all set within 30 acres of garden and ancient parkland. £6 entry fee and free parking.

ADDRESS **Selborne, Alton, Hampshire GU34 3JH**
WEB **www.gilbertwhiteshouse.org.uk**

4 TRENTHAM GARDENS

Winners of the 2010 European Award for Historic Garden Restoration. Vast perennial plantings by renowned designers Tom Stuart-Smith and Piet Oudolf present breathtaking vistas. Enjoy the Italian Garden, mile-long lake, show gardens, adventure playground, woodland walks and tearoom with panoramic views. Adjacent is an impressive shopping village and garden centre.

ADDRESS **Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 8JG**
TEL **01782 646646** WEB **www.trentham.co.uk**

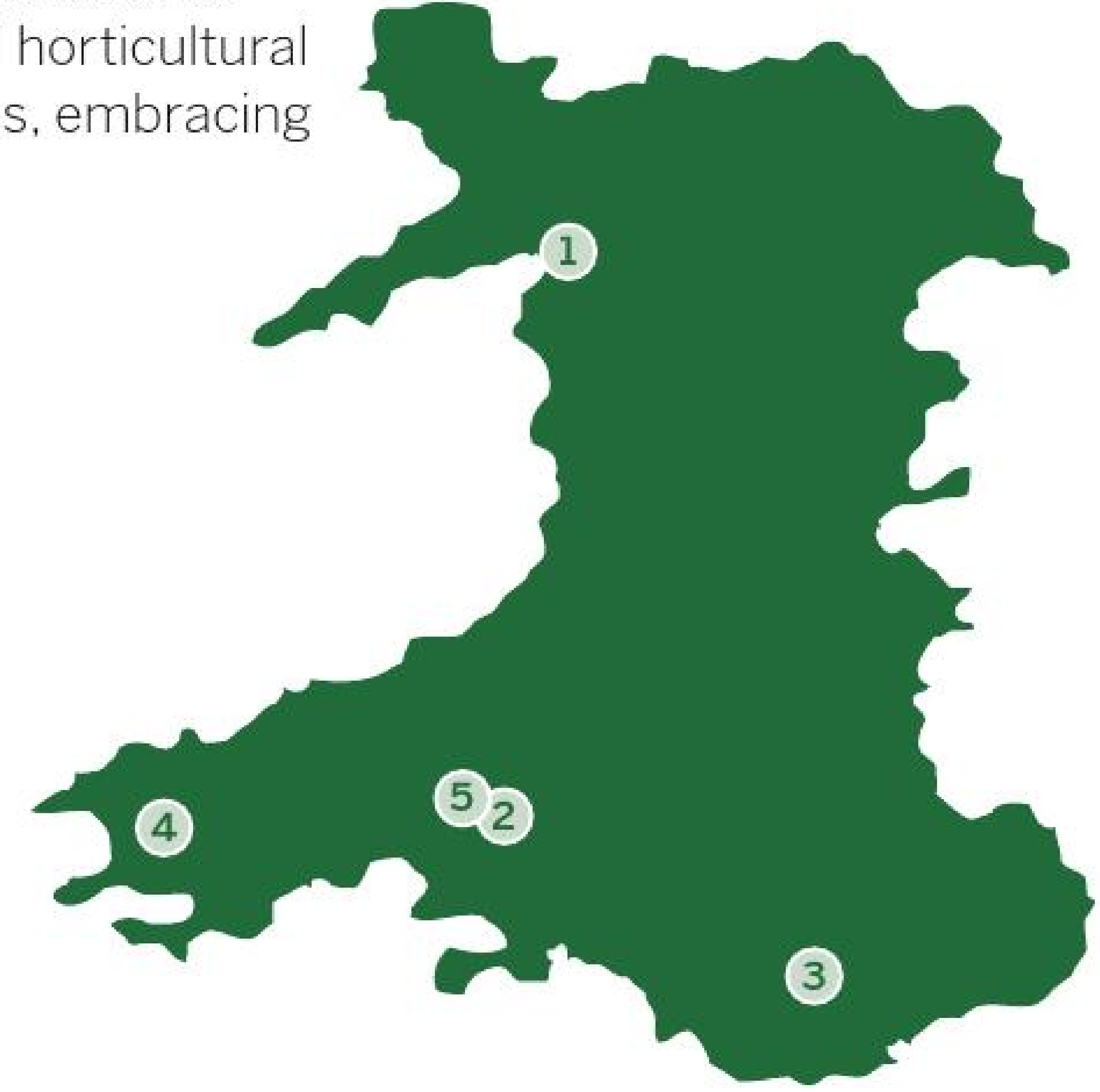
5 NESS BOTANIC GARDENS

Ness Gardens announces the return of the BBC Radio 4 *Gardeners' Question Time* Summer Garden Party on Saturday 7 September 2013, following the outstanding success of last year's event. Check the website for details. New for 2013: The Garden Kitchen café and Garden Kiosk together with our newly refurbished gift shop and plant sales. Gardens open 10am–5pm.

ADDRESS **Ness, Neston, South Wirral CH64 4AY**
TEL **0845 030 4063** WEB **www.nessgardens.org.uk**

A Wondrous Wales

Wales is a region rich with a bounty of incredible gardens for you to visit. Why not make the trip to this beautiful horticultural treasure trove and indulge in a selection of gardens, embracing the variety of delights they have to offer.



1 PORTMEIRION VILLAGE

Portmeirion's Italianate gardens on the west coast of Snowdonia have formal plantings around a central piazza. The Gwyllt sub-tropical woodlands that surround the village were planted in Victorian times and were followed in Edwardian times with plantings of rhododendron, azalea and camellia. The gardens have 20 miles of footpaths and are fronted to the south by miles of sandy beaches. Open all year.

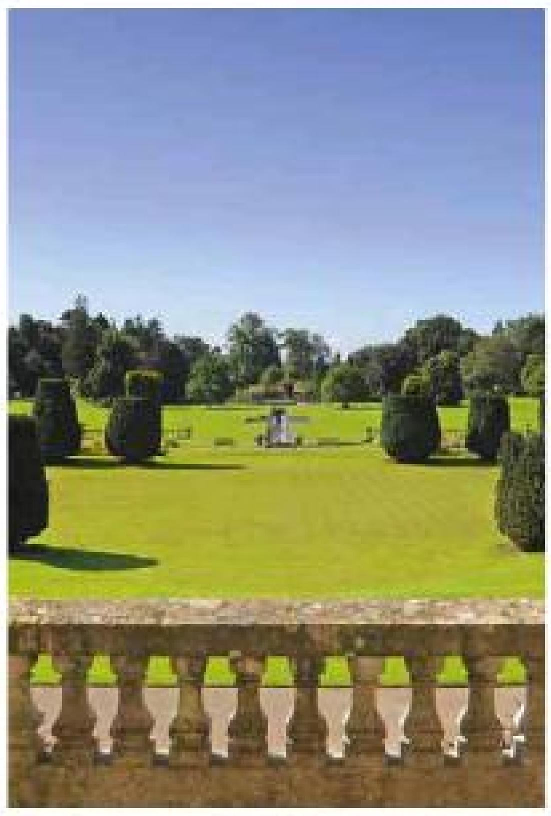
ADDRESS **Portmeirion, Gwynedd LL48 6ER**
TEL **01766 770000** WEBSITE **www.portmeirion-village.com**

2 NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN OF WALES

There's always something to see at the National Botanic Garden of Wales. Lord Foster's Great Glasshouse – the world's largest single span glasshouse – houses one of the finest collections of Mediterranean plants, there's an orchid-rich Tropical House, lakeside walks, a national nature reserve and wonderful planting providing year-round interest. Visit the beautiful wooded valley of Pont Felin Gat to find this jewel of a waterfall.

ADDRESS **Llanarthne, Carmarthenshire SA32 8HG**
TEL **01558 668768** WEBSITE **www.gardenofwales.org.uk**

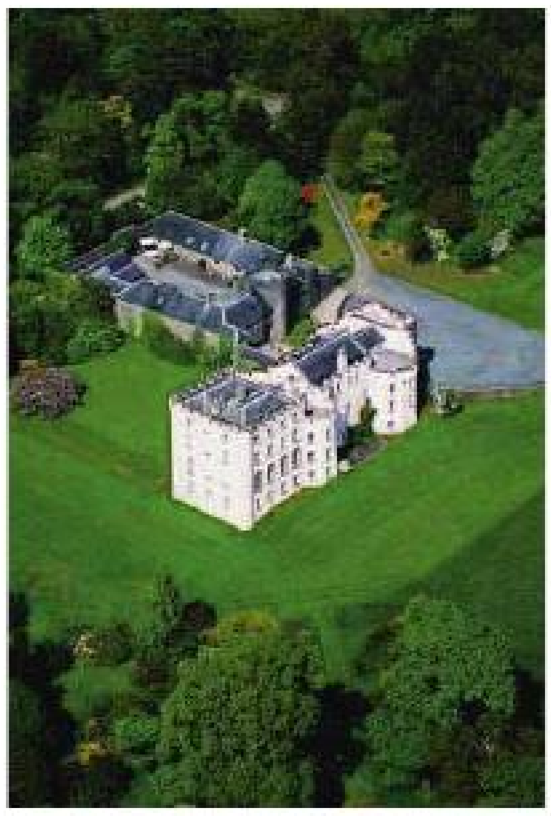
3 DYFFRYN GARDENS



Dyffryn Gardens, set in the heart of the Vale of Glamorgan countryside, is an exceptional example of Edwardian garden design. Within the 55-acre gardens is a series of stunning outdoor garden rooms, an impressive arboretum, formal lawn areas, a fernery and much more, all of which helps to make Dyffryn one of Wales' number one gardens.

ADDRESS **Dyffryn Gardens, St Nicholas, Vale of Glamorgan CF5 6SU**
TEL **029 2059 3328** WEBSITE **www.dyffryngardens.com**

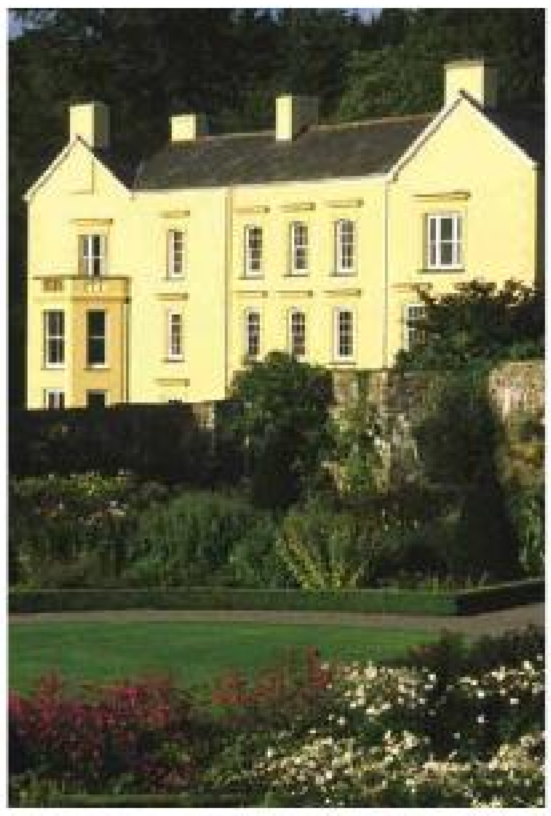
4 PICTON CASTLE



Picton Castle is one of the great gardens of West Wales with all-year-round interest. There are 40 acres of uniquely beautiful gardens with riotous displays of summer colour in the walled and jungle gardens along with tranquil walks. Entertain the family with seasonal trails, adventure play area and maze. Special offer of 2 for 3 on entry July to September.

ADDRESS **Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire SA62 4AS**
TEL **01437 751326** WEBSITE **www.pictoncastle.co.uk/contact**

5 ABERGLASNEY GARDENS



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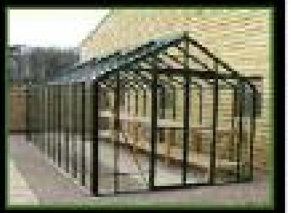

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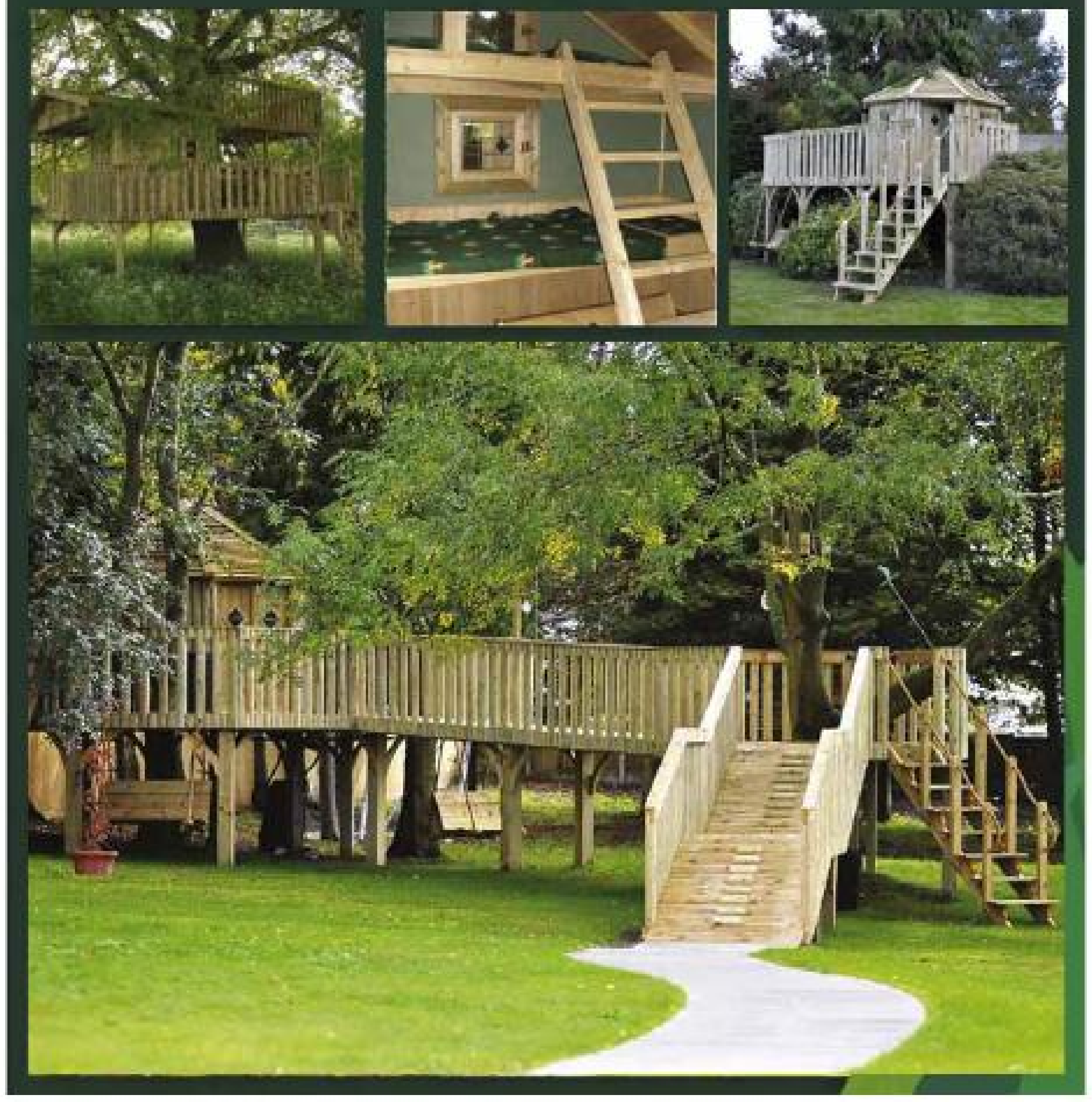

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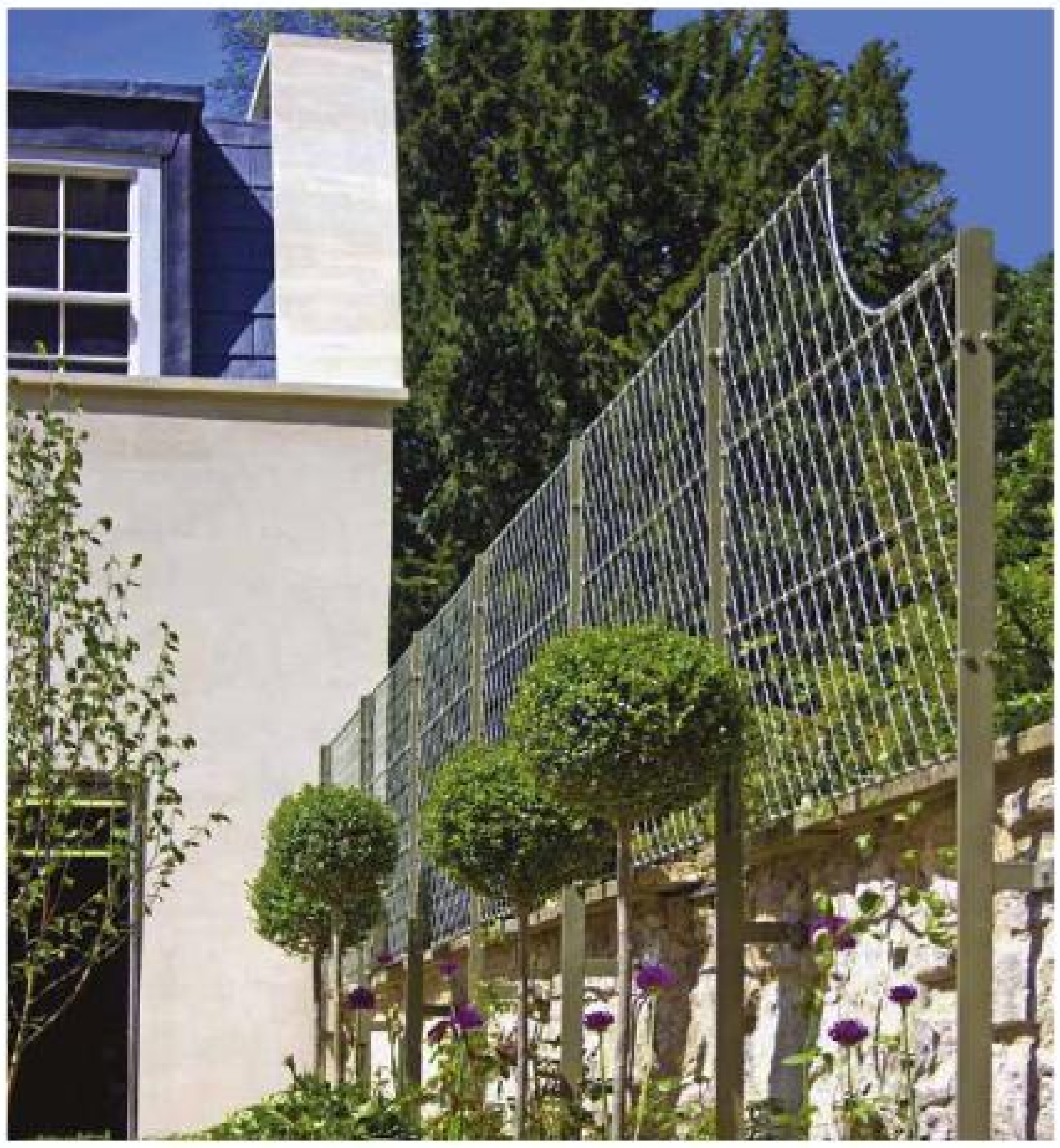

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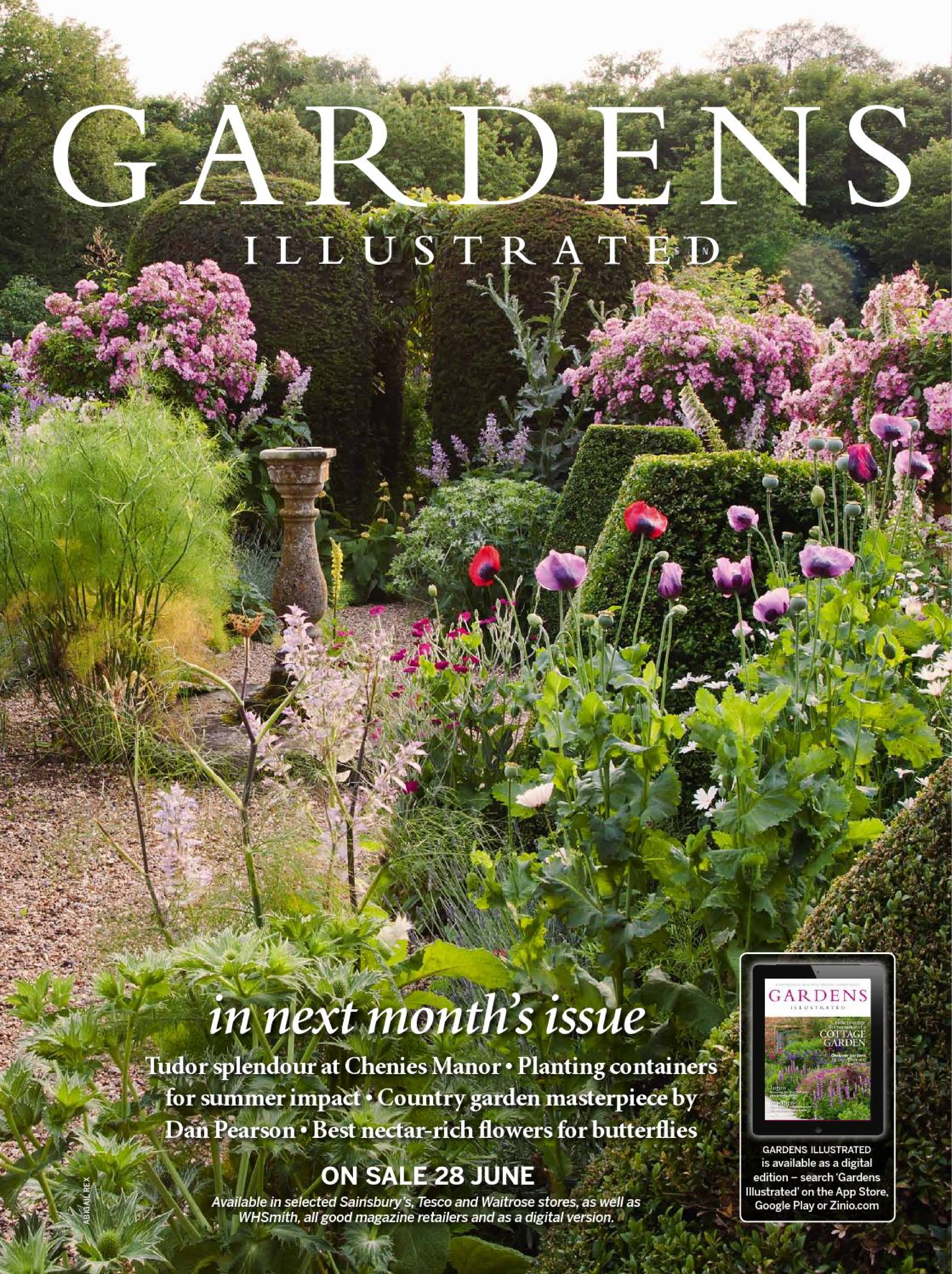

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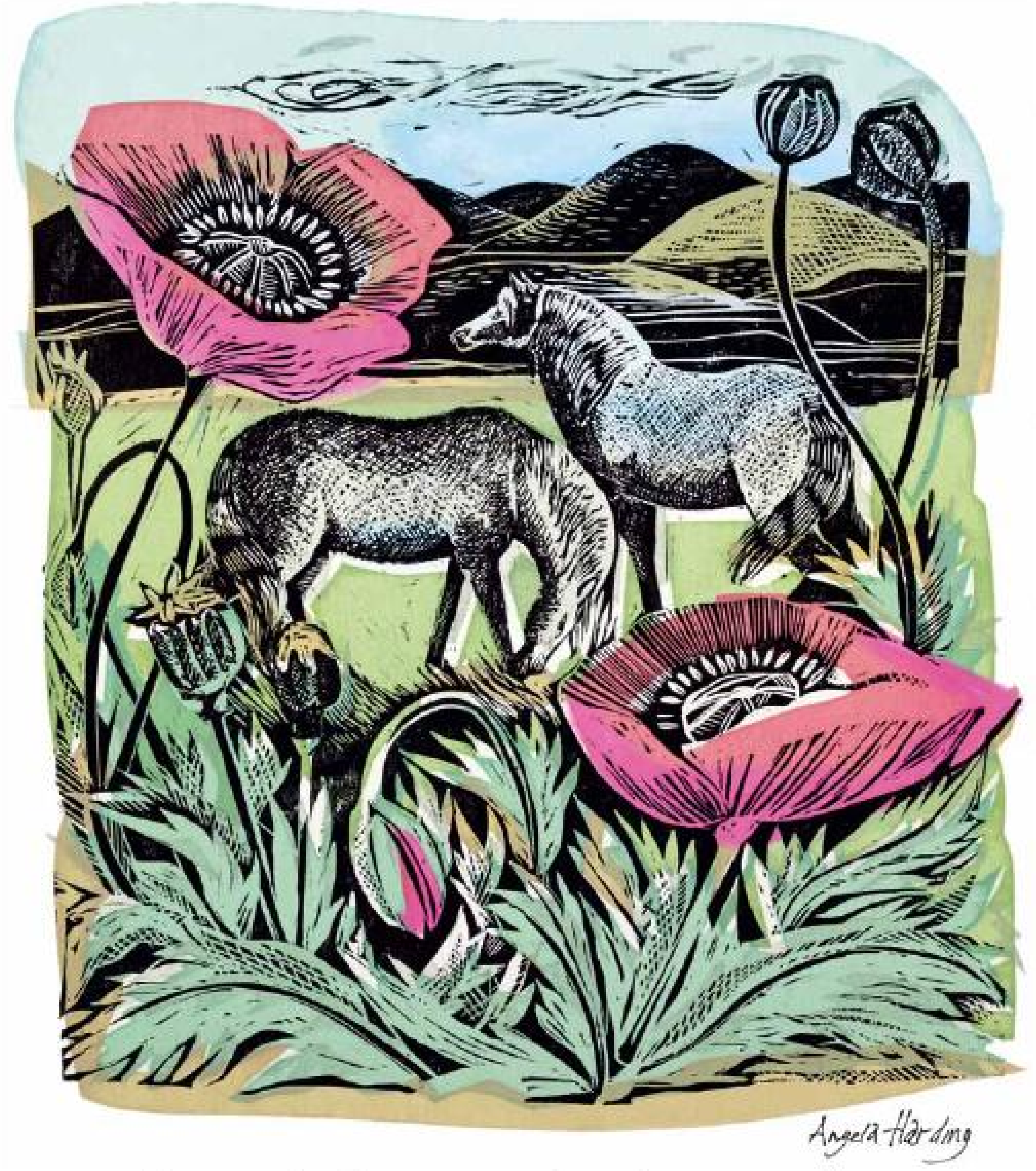
Poppy love

In which a history of travails with poppies is revealed

WORDS **FRANK RONAN** ILLUSTRATION **ANGELA HARDING**



"Happily there are a lot of poppies that will come of their own accord"

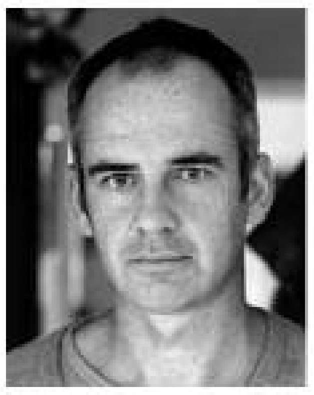
The Californian tree poppy is an elusive beast. I've only managed to grow it once, in a garden where it had been established by someone else and where I didn't prevail for long enough to see it off. My excuse in this garden is that *Romneya coulteri* won't stand a high water table in winter, but that get-out clause is about to be tested in a designated corner of the big new raised bed that is being made primarily for fruit. If it won't condescend to live there at least the raspberries that encroach on its grave will be some compensation, and I can finally stop flogging that dead horse.

The other famously difficult genus of poppy does a little better for me. There was a decent bed of various kinds of blue *Meconopsis* for a year or two, until all the moisture and manure that had gone into the making of it enticed the roots of the nearby spruce that was shading it, resulting in what can only be described as desertification. That bed is only good for columbines and cow-parsley now, which is actually very nice. Meanwhile my friend Michael at Cally Gardens, who can grow *Meconopsis* as far as the eye can see, has put me on to acquiring some of his more stoloniferously inclined varieties, which can be divided like ordinary perennials, and so bypass the endless fiddle of saving and sowing fresh seed.

Meconopsis napaulensis and *M. paniculata* are monocarpic to their marrow. You never know what you're in for, since whatever is labelled as one could be either or more probably a hybrid of the two, meaning that the flowers could be yellow, red, white or, if you're very lucky, purple, and on a spectacular man-sized candelabrum. Before that happens, summer and winter, you'll have enjoyed a giant rosette of exquisitely hairy leaves which always looks particularly beguiling among the snowdrops. Afterwards they need replacing, so I keep an eye out for new plants on visits to Scottish nurseries – they seem generally absent from English ones for what is presumably the same reason as me not having much luck with my own seed. These monsters are a very good ingredient of a new planting, first because they enjoy the fresh conditions and second because in a year or two they will have finished performing and made way for their up and coming neighbours.

Happily there are a lot of poppies that will come of their own accord and oblige you in any gap that you have overlooked. I love the way opium poppies appear overnight on a recently disturbed bit of ground, and always leave more of them than I should among the vegetables to the detriment of the table. It is justified by thinking that their bruised and muddy purples never look so good in isolation, but can be spectacular en masse. You should always mark the best to be left to ripen and try to pull all the rest before they begin to rattle. Usually you leave it a day too late and your cull becomes a mass broadcast.

I have heard people speak of the Welsh poppy, *Meconopsis cambrica* as a menace, but have yet to see too much of it, and we can look to Wales on a clear day so it should be at home. The ladybird, *Papaver commutatum*, is a long way from the Caucasus and I never find any seed on it at all, but the advantage of that is that while it might only last a week on those scorched slopes, it goes on and on all summer here, hoping in vain for a breath of hot air to make it fertile. Oriental poppies, whose ancestors might have been neighbours of the ladybirds, are in glory for a scant ten days or so, hot or cold. The most glorious I know is the aptly named 'Raspberry Queen,' from the first eruption of crumpled petal to the great shout of ultimate pink across the garden.



Frank Ronan is a novelist who lives and gardens in Worcestershire

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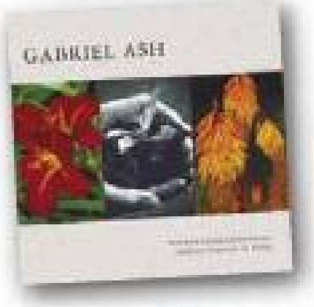

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